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This place grows colder, my friend. Its energy wanes. I am seeking a solution, and eagerly welcome your thoughts.

It is not like you to be so troubled.

So long ago, when it was all set in motion, it was so... fascinating in its complexity. It surprised even me. Now things are static, worlds grow cold, and what were once glorious fields of battle lay still and barren.

The problem is not simply lazy warriors. The vital energies on which we all depend are fading away... it shouldn't happen like this... yet it is! It is dying, and the First do *nothing* to prevent it!

Because the First don't understand. They have no idea of the connection between their actions and the Whole.

Yes. They need... motivation. They must be forced to reignite the cycle...

Yet... they know nothing of my existence. To do so would *change* them...

Why look only to the First?

There are many worlds open to you. So many people...

If you were to step in quietly -- walk among them. Then a subtle touch, to add just a small mark of your passage -- a sign.

Your sign.

Imagine... each world, one soul, marked with the sigil. Opened to the power.

Why just one?

I was thinking in terms of efficiency. The number is unimportant. A small number makes for a clear burden on each: too many, and they let someone else do the work.

As we have already seen with the First. Still...

Come...

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Ah... this was my first world.

Time and evolution have changed it from the simple world it was. But look at how it has grown!

New races of man have even been created. Although I see that they are treated as less than men.

Yet we've seen little battle of late. Their mock combat needs to be hammered into the steel of true war. Their old hatreds need to burn again.

Simple enough. If you follow *your* plan...

What will I tell them, these... *Sigil-Bearers?*

Give them no warning, no direction; let their actions dictate the flare of the sigil.

This will reenergize your warriors. Bring them back to their purpose. Have them fight off the chill of their current ennui.

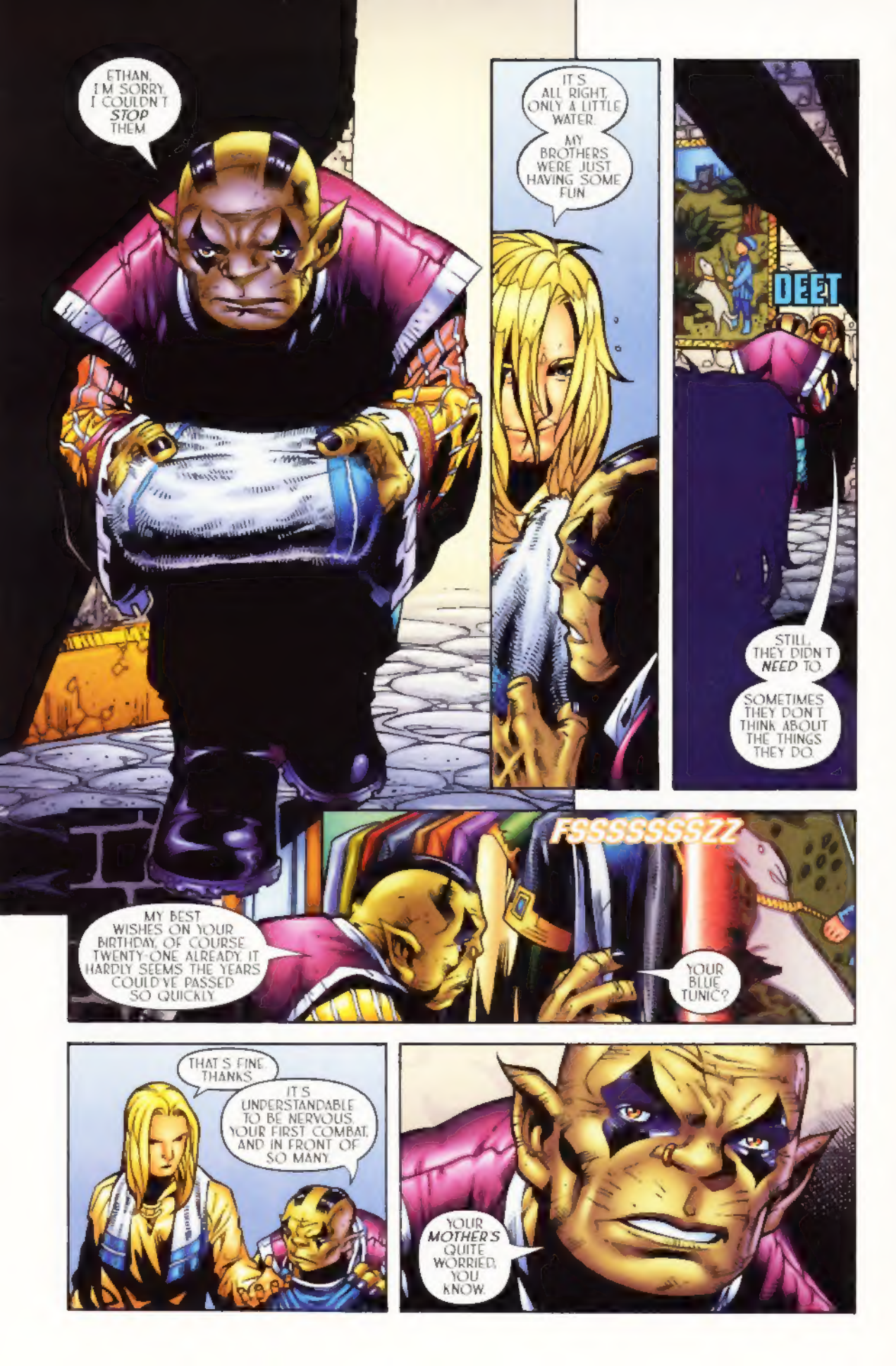
You mean Cross-Generation.
YES. POWER FROM CONFLICT. ENERGY CREATING ENERGY.
AS THE NEW ONES WORK TOWARD THEIR OWN DEFINITION, THEY SERVE YOUR NEEDS.
I TELL YOU, YOU COULD START A NEW CHAIN OF CREATION TO STOKE THE COOLING FIRES OF THE WHOLE.
I FEEL IT GROWING WARMER ALREADY.
Ron MARZ WRITER
Jim CHEUNG PENCILER
Don HILLSMAN II INKER
Caesar RODRIGUEZ COLORIST
Dave LANPHEAR LETTERER
The CrossGen Universe created by Mark Alessi and Gina M. Villa

ETHAN! ETHAN! ETHAN!
AN! ETHAN! ETHAN! E
ETHAN! ETHAN! ETHAN
ETHA ETHAN!
ETHAN!

ETHAN!
ETHAN
ETHAN
ETHAN
ETHAN...

...ETHAN!
Uhm?
AHH!
COME ON
...WAKE UP, LITTLE BROTHER!
THIS IS THE DAY YOU BECOME A MAN, ETHAN. CAN'T HAVE YOU WASTING IT IN BED.
Uh...
KAI?
ARTOR?

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, ETHAN!
SINCERELY
THANKS, KAI.
I THINK
NERVOUS ON THE CUSP OF YOUR FIRST TOURNAMENT?
Um
NO. NO, NOT AT ALL
YOU'RE NOT A VERY CONVINCING LIAR, LITTLE BROTHER.
THE BARGES DEPART FOR THE TOURNAMENT ISLE IN THE AFTERNOON. YOU'VE A LOT TO DO BEFORE THEN.
THE ARMORSMITH IS EXPECTING YOU.
DON'T KEEP HIM WAITING, ETHAN.
AND YOU WON'T BE LATE TO THE DOCKS, RIGHT?
SKINK.
YOUR BOY'S A LITTLE WET.


ETHAN, I'M SORRY. I COULDN'T *STOP* THEM.
IT'S ALL RIGHT, ONLY A LITTLE WATER.
MY BROTHERS WERE JUST HAVING SOME FUN.
DEET
STILL, THEY DIDN'T *NEED* TO.
SOMETIMES THEY DON'T THINK ABOUT THE THINGS THEY DO.
FSSSSSSSZZ
MY BEST WISHES ON YOUR BIRTHDAY, OF COURSE. TWENTY-ONE ALREADY. IT HARDLY SEEMS THE YEARS COULD'VE PASSED SO QUICKLY.
YOUR BLUE TUNIC?
THAT'S FINE, THANKS.
IT'S UNDERSTANDABLE TO BE NERVOUS. YOUR FIRST COMBAT, AND IN FRONT OF SO MANY.
YOUR *MOTHER'S* QUITE WORRIED, YOU KNOW.

OF COURSE SHE'S WORRIED. SHE'S MY MOTHER. IT'S WHAT SHE DOES.
SHE HAS GOOD REASON.
THERE'S SOMETHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE TOURNAMENT. YOUR FATHER IS SUPPOSED TO TELL YOU BUT—
IS THAT SOMEONE NEW? THERE, WITH THE TRAY?
ETHAN, PLEASE. THIS IS IMPORTANT.
NOW YOU'RE BEGINNING TO SOUND LIKE MY MOTHER, SKINK.
OPEN.
SUB-BASEMENT FORGE.
I'VE BEEN TRAINING. YOU'LL BE THERE WITH ME. I'M NOT WORRIED.
MUCH
MAYBE YOU SHOULD BE.
WHAT'S THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?
SMITH? HELLO?

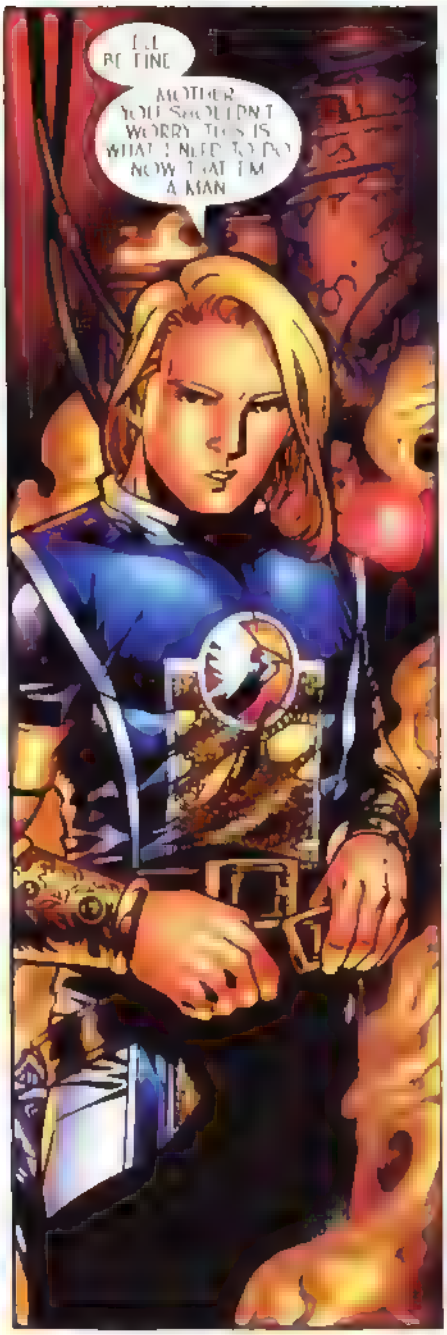
ETHAN
LOOK AT YOU ALL GROWN UP NOW I USED TO SHOO YOU AWAY FROM MY FURNACES WHEN YOU WERE KNEE HIGH TO SKINK THERE
COME BY JUST FOR A VISIT HAVE YOU?
WELL ACTUALLY I WAS YOU KNOW. HOPING MY THINGS WERE
HOPING THEY WERE READY?
WOULDN'T DO TO DISAPPOINT THE PRINCE ON HIS BIRTHDAY WOULD IT?
A WARRIOR'S TOURNAMENT BLADE AND ARMOR ARE AMONG HIS MOST PRECIOUS POSSESSIONS ETHAN
SO DON'T GO OFF AND SHATTER THIS hm?

IT'S WONDERFUL
ISN'T IT
THE DESIGNS BASED ON THE BLADE OF YOUR ANCESTOR ODVIN
YOU KNOW HIS TALE YES
ONE OF THE TWO SURVIVORS WHO FOUGHT TO A DRAW ON WHAT WOULD BECOME THE TOURNAMENT S
I THOUGHT IT WAS APPROPRIATE YOU BEING BORN ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF THAT DAY
YOU'LL NEED THESE TOO ONE FOR YOUR SHIELD DEPRESS THE STUD TO GENERATE IT
AND THE OTHER FOR YOUR ARMOR THEY FIT PROPERLY
PERFECTLY THEY'RE
PARDON SIR

BUT I SEEM TO HAVE MISPLACED MY SON
I COULD SWEAR HE WAS A LITTLE BOY ABOUT SO HIGH BUT ALL I FIND IS A STRAPPING YOUNG MAN
I WONDER IF YOU COULD TELL ME WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM
HAPPY BIRTHDAY ETHAN
FATHER
DID YOU SEE?
A BEAUTIFUL BLADE THE SMITHS OUTDONE HIMSELF
I HOPE IT'S A LUCKY BLADE TOO ESPECIALLY IF YOU'RE STILL COMMITTED TO USING HIM AS YOUR SECOND
I MEMBER OF THE LESSER RACES ETHAN AND COURT JESTER AT THAT IT'S SIMPLY NOT DONE
SKINNS TAKEN CARE OF ME MY WHOLE LIFE
HE'LL TAKE CARE OF ME IN THE ARENA

YOUR YOUNGEST SON'S A MAN NOW DANE. OLD ENOUGH TO MAKE HIS OWN DECISIONS
EVEN IF ONE OF THOSE DECISIONS IS TO TAKE PART IN THAT BARBARIC TOURNAMENT
THIS AGAIN MARELLA?
HELLO, MOTHER. YLENA
MAJESTY
HAVE YOU AT LEAST TOLD HIM? MAYBE HE'LL SEE REASON
THE TOURNAMENTS EXISTED FOR CENTURIES. THAT YOU DON'T APPROVE OF IT DOESN'T CHANGE THE FACT THAT IT KEEPS THE PEACE BETWEEN US AND OUR NEIGHBORS TO THE EAST.
AVALON HASN'T KNOWN TRUE WARFARE SINCE RITUAL COMBAT BEGAN
AND OUR FAMILY HAS ALWAYS HAD A ROLE IN IT
HAPPY BIRTHDAY, DEAR
THANKS
FROM ME AS WELL
ETHAN, I'M PROUD YOU WANT TO CARRY ON OUR TRADITION. BUT YOUR MOTHER'S RIGHT. IT'S ONLY FAIR YOU KNOW WHAT AWAITS YOU
THE TOURNAMENT DRAW MATCHES YOU AGAINST *BRON*. I DON'T HAVE TO TELL YOU HIS REPUTATION. HE *HAS* BEATEN BOTH YOUR BROTHERS IN THE PAST
BUT I'LL SUPPORT WHATEVER DECISION YOU MAKE. WE ALL WILL.
I'M NOT AFRAID OF BRON.

YOU'VE GOT A STRONG ARM AND STRONG STEEL AT YOUR SIDE. ETHAN. KEEP A HEAD ON YOUR SHOULDERS
AND YOU'LL KEEP A HEAD ON YOUR SHOULDERS
I WILL


I'LL BE FINE
MOTHER, YOU SHOULDN'T WORRY. THIS IS WHAT I NEED TO DO NOW THAT I'M A MAN

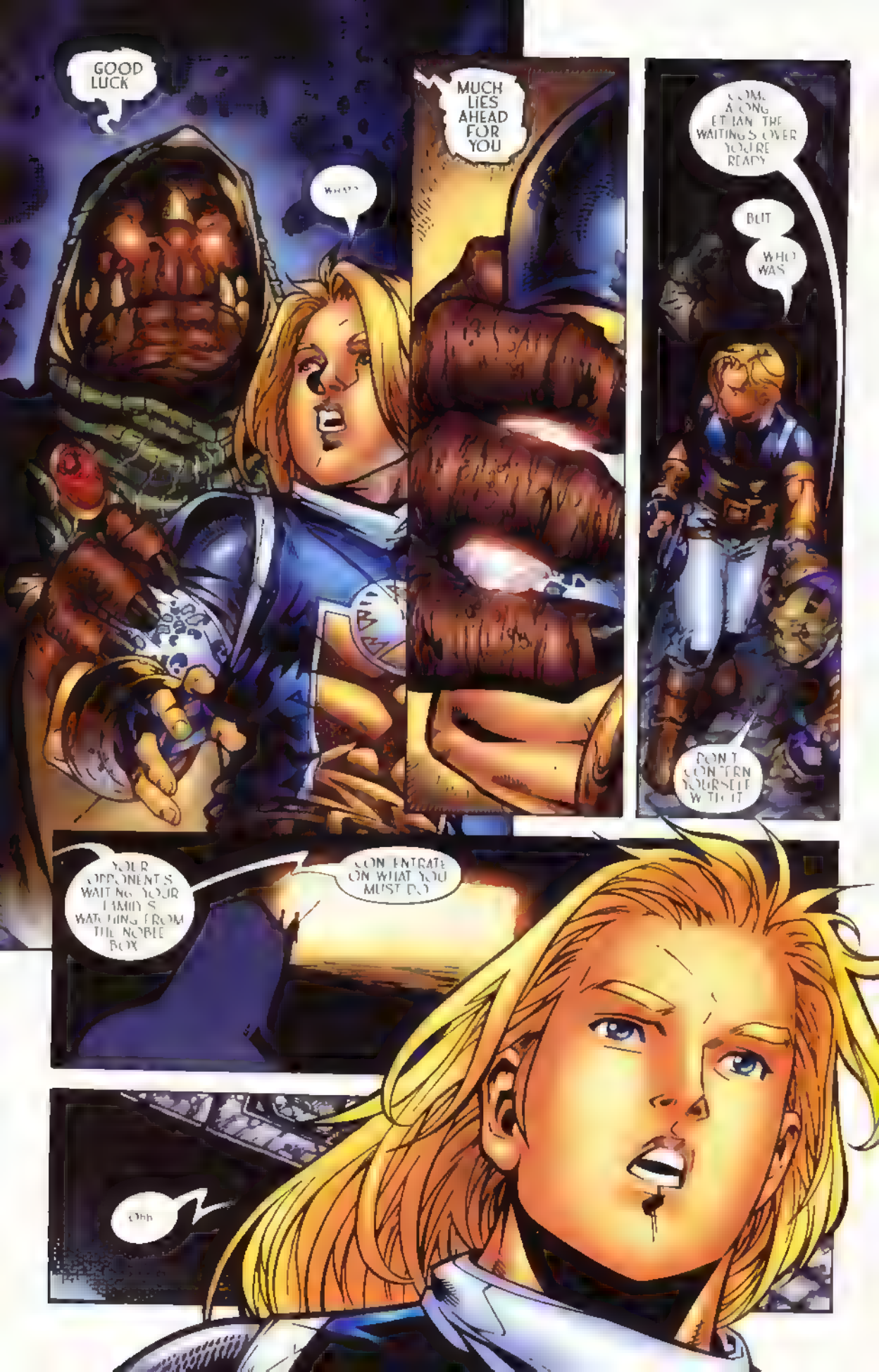
I WON'T LET ANYTHING HAPPEN TO HIM MAJESTY

EXPECT TO BE HELD TO THAT PROMISE SKINK
WE NEED TO BOARD THE BARGES SOON MAKE WHATEVER LAST PREPARATIONS YOU NEED AND GET TO THE DOCKS

ETHAN WAIT. I HAVE SOMETHING FOR YOU BRI

FOR LUCK

CALM DOWN ETHAN
YOUR TURN'S COMING SOON
I'M JUST I'M NOT SCARED SHINK
IT'S THIS WAITING
I FEEL LIKE SOMETHING'S ABOUT TO HAPPEN AND I
PHYSICIANS!
WE NEED PHYSICIANS! HIS ARM!
NNGH
GAAH!
BOY


GOOD LUCK
WHAT?
MUCH LIES AHEAD FOR YOU
COME ALONG ET IAN THE WAITING'S OVER YOU'RE READY
BUT WHO WAS
DON'T CONCERN YOURSELF WITH IT
YOUR OPPONENT'S WAITING YOUR FAMILY'S WATCHING FROM THE NOBLE BOX
CONCENTRATE ON WHAT YOU MUST DO
Ohh

COMBATANTS WILL STEP TO THE CIRCLE.

COMBATANT?

ETHAN DON'T LET HIM CONCENTRATE
RIGHT
COMBAT TO COMMENCE BETWEEN PRINCE ETHAN OF THE HERON DYNASTY OF THE WEST...
...AND PRINCE BRON OF THE RAVEN DYNASTY OF THE EAST.
TRADITIONAL RULES OF THE TOURNAMENT APPLY.
COMBAT IS TO FIRST BLOOD OR A YIELDING. PHYSICIANS MAY ENTER THE CIRCLE AT THEIR DISCRETION OR WHEN SUMMONED. MY DECISIONS AS ARBITER ARE FINAL AND BINDING
IN THE NAME OF THE SURVIVORS, MAY THE PEACE BE FOREVER KEPT.
ARE THE COMBATANTS AND THEIR SECONDS PREPARED?
YES
YES
YOU MAY INITIATE YOUR ARMOR
HMMMMMMM
HMMMMMMM

COMBAT BEGINS ON MY WORD.
IGNITE YOUR BLADES..
...AND FIGHT.
AAAA!

CLANG
AAAH!
HNN
GHH!

YOU'RE LESS THAN YOUR BROTHERS BOY!
AAAAH!
CUT HIM, BRON!
VVVANG
UFF!
VANG
VANG

EYAAGH!
HOW'S MY BLADE DOING THAT?

I
I WON! I—
THE WOUND IS BEYOND OUR MEANS TO HEAL. HE WILL BE SCARRED
BUT THAT CAN'T BE
A WEAPON THAT WOULD INFLICT AN UNHEALABLE WOUND IS ILLEGAL! YOU HAVE VIOLATED THE RULES OF THE TOURNAMENT WORSE, YOU HAVE VIOLATED ITS SPIRIT.
VICTORY BELONGS TO BRON. YOU ARE CENSURED
YOUR ARM!

WHAT
IS
IT?

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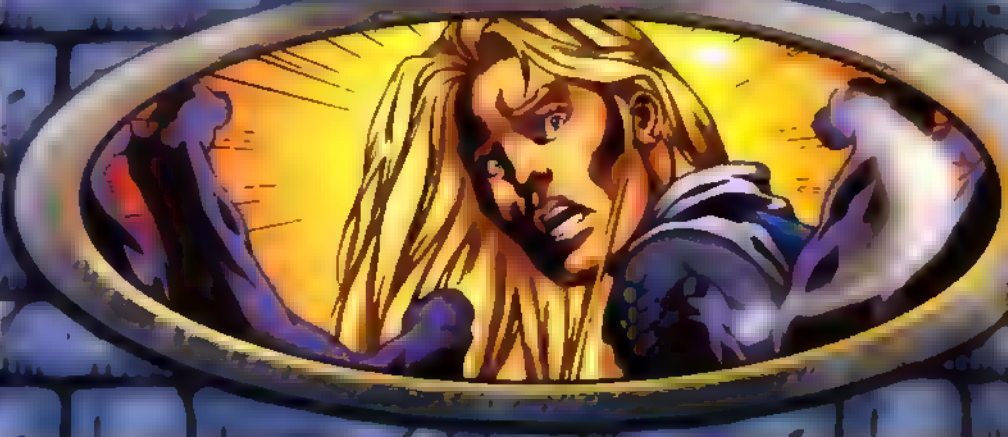
CAESAR

Thus Far in Scion

Ethan is the youngest prince of the Heron Dynasty, traditional rulers of the Western kingdom on the world of Avalon. On his twenty-first birthday, the day a boy moves from adolescence to manhood, Ethan takes part in the annual Tournament of ritual combat. A centuries-old tradition, the tournament historically eases the tensions between the West and its bitter rival, the Raven Dynasty of the East.

Accompanying Ethan, against the wishes of the king, is his trusted friend Skink, the Heron court jester and a member of the genetically-created Lesser Races. Prior to Ethan's combat, and unknown to him, a cloaked stranger imprints him with a sigil, a mysterious mark of power. With his parents, brothers and sister in attendance, Ethan enters the cavernous arena to face Bron, a notorious Raven prince.

Ethan comports himself bravely in his first combat, but is overmatched by the brutal Bron. On the brink of defeat, Ethan snatches the victory when his sigil suddenly grants him the might to best his opponent. Ethan's triumph is costly, however, as he accidentally cuts Bron's face and leaves an unhealable scar, a clear violation of tournament etiquette. Ethan retreats into a tunnel under the arena, where he is confronted by the enraged Bron...



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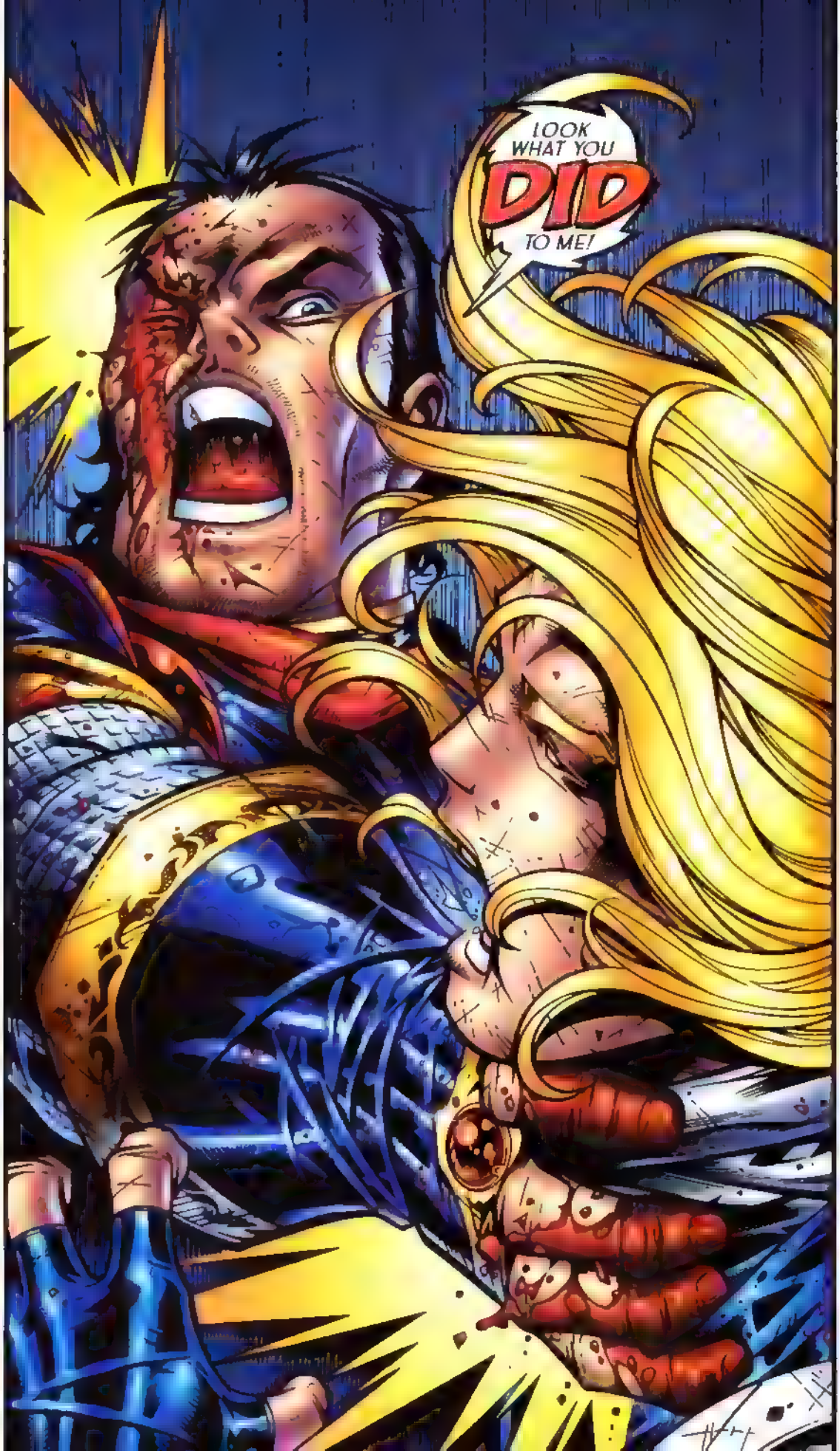

LOOK WHAT YOU DID TO ME!

I DIDN'T MEAN T BRON

IT WAS AN *ACCIDENT*

THEN IT WAS AN ACCIDENT WORTH YOUR *LIFE*, BOY!

TAKE YOUR HANDS OFF MY BROTHER

OR YOU'LL BE WEARING A LOT *MORE* OF YOUR OWN BLOOD

GOOD BOY

WELL WELL

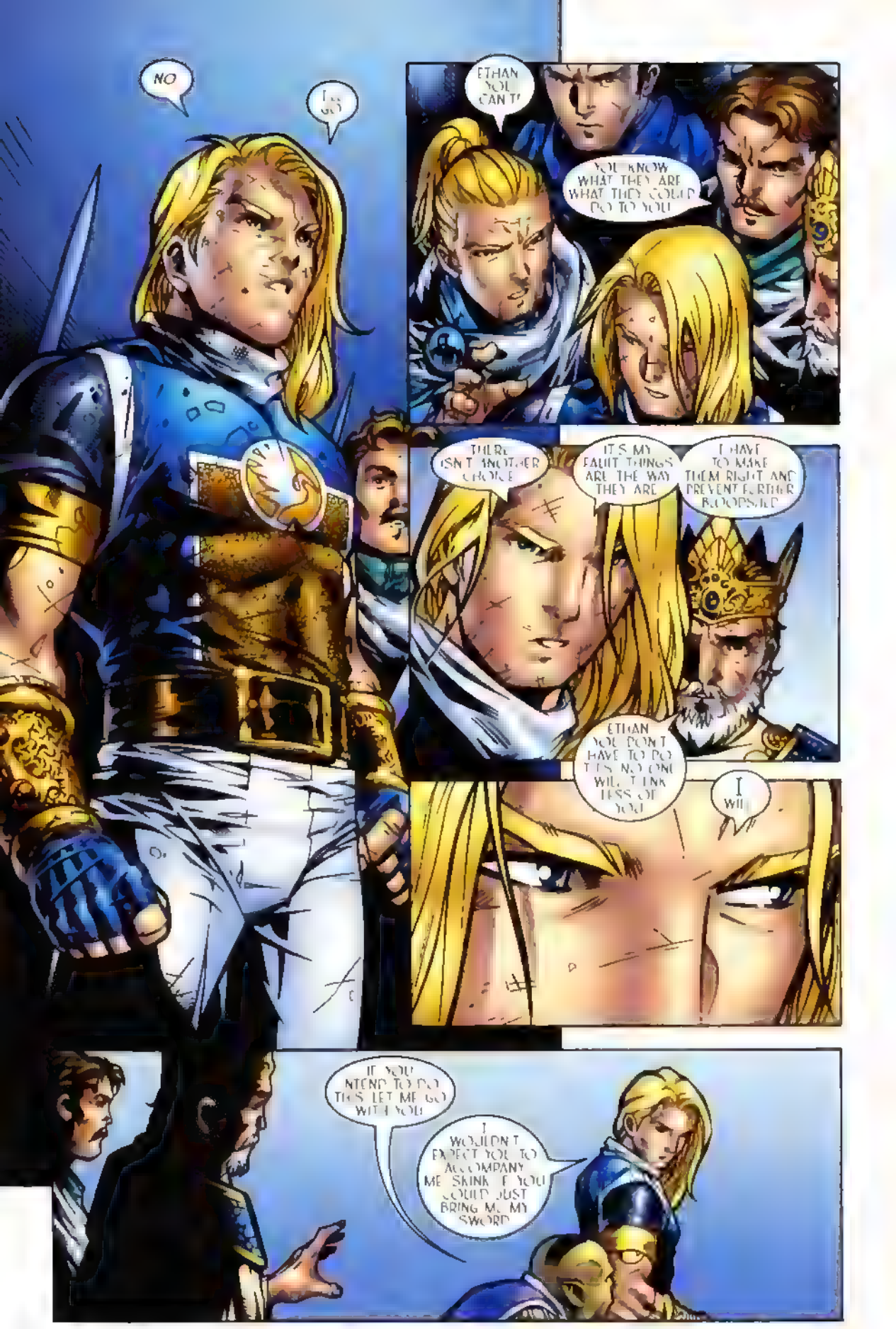
APPARENTLY WESTERN DOGS RUN IN PACKS

MIND YOUR TONGUE, LEST IT SUFFER THE SAME FATE AS YOUR EYE

ETHAN
NO CAMERAS
WE SAW WHAT HAPPENED IN THE ARENA. ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
FINE MOTHER I'M FINE
HE'S A MAN NOW MARIEL. A DON'T BABY HIM
EXPLAIN YOURSELF ETHAN
I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING AGAINST THE RULES FATHER
I FOUGHT BRON FAIRLY I DON'T KNOW WHY HIS WOUND CAN'T BE HEALED
IT MUST HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH THIS, BUT I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT IT IS OR HOW IT GOT THERE
THE MARK JUST APPEARED?
PERHAPS IF YOU'D CHOSEN A PROPER SECOND THERE WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN
TREACHERY!

TREACHERY MOST BASE THOUGH I SHOULD EXPECT NOTHING LESS FROM A SCION OF THE HERON DYNASTY
YOUR WHELP HAS COMMITTED A GRIEVOUS BREACH OF THE TOURNAMENT'S SPIRIT THE EVIDENCE OF IT CARVED INTO MY SON'S FACE
DON'T THINK THIS LUDICROUS TALE OF A MYSTERIOUS MARK BRINGING POWER TEMPERS THIS SLIGHT IF PROPER RESPONSIBILITIES AREN'T TAKEN
THIS AFFRONT COULD LEAD TO WIDER CONFLICT
SPARE ME YOUR THREATS RAVEN MY SON GIVES HIS WORD IT WAS AN ACCIDENT
YOU REFUSE TO EVEN ADMIT YOUR DECEIT?
WHAT HAPPENED DOES NOT MATTER!
WHAT MATTERS IS WHAT'S GOING TO BE DONE ABOUT IT!
WE DEMAND REPARATION
HIM, AS A PRISONER UNTIL THE NEXT TOURNAMENT IN ONE YEAR'S TIME

SO HE CAN SUFFER THE TENDER MERCIES OF YOUR HOSPITALITY? I THINK NOT
I HAVE BEEN WRONGED! I WILL HAVE SATISFACTION!
YOU'LL NOT HAVE MY SON
WHAT SHALL WE HAVE THEN? WAR?


NO
I'm GO
ETHAN YOU CAN'T!
YOU KNOW WHAT THEY ARE WHAT THEY COULD DO TO YOU
THERE ISN'T ANOTHER CHOICE
IT'S MY FAULT THINGS ARE THE WAY THEY ARE
I HAVE TO MAKE THEM RIGHT AND PREVENT FURTHER BLOODSHED
ETHAN YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO THIS NO ONE WILL THINK LESS OF YOU
I WILL
IF YOU INTEND TO DO THIS LET ME GO WITH YOU
I WOULDN'T EXPECT YOU TO ACCOMPANY ME SKINK IF YOU COULD JUST BRING ME MY SWORD

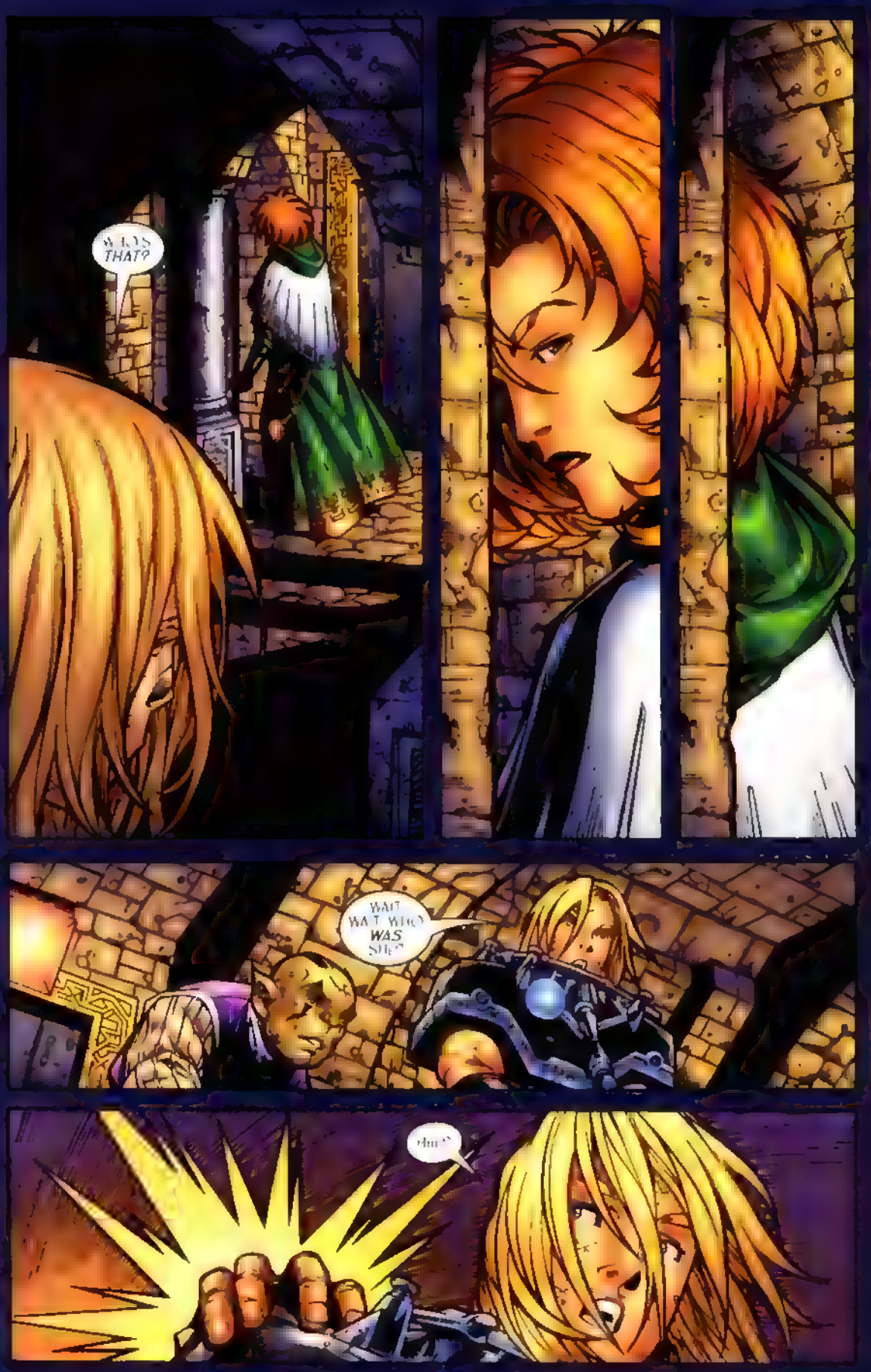
ARE YOU SURE THIS IS WHAT YOU WANT TO DO? OUR DYNASTY, THE ENTIRE KINGDOM OF THE WEST WILL STAND BEHIND YOU.
MOTHER
I WOULDN'T BE THE SON YOU RAISED IF I DIDN'T SHOULDER MY RESPONSIBILITIES.
I'LL BE ALL RIGHT.
YLENA?
ETHAN JUST
YOU CAN'T DO THIS
YOU KNOW OUR SISTER, ETHAN. IT'S NOT YOU SHE'S UPSET WITH.
BE STRONG.
WILL
KAI
IRTOR
A MAN'S NOT MEASURED BY HIS YEARS, LITTLE BROTHER. A MAN IS MEASURED BY HIS ACTIONS.
TODAY YOU BECAME A MAN.
THIS IS THE RIGHT THING TO DO, FATHER.
I KNOW.
POLITICALLY, I KNOW THAT DOESN'T MAKE IT ANY LESS BITTER TO SWALLOW.
GOODBYE.
YOU MAKE ME PROUD, MY SON.

MY PLACE HAS ALWAYS BEEN TO BE AT YOUR SIDE. ETHAN DON'T ASK ME TO FORSAKE THAT DUTY
I WON'T TELL YOU NO SKINK
BUT THE DECISION'S NOT MINE
AS YOU ARE THE ONE I HAVE WRONGED I SURRENDER MYSELF INTO YOUR CARE AND AGAIN APOLOGIZE FOR THE INJURY I HAVE CAUSED YOU
I HAVE ONE REQUEST THOUGH I KNOW YOU HAVE NO REASON TO GRANT IT
MY SERVANT WISHES TO ACCOMPANY ME DURING MY EXILE WILL YOU ALLOW ME THIS INDULGENCE?
FRANKLY I COULD CARE LESS WHAT YOUR HUMPBACKED PIECE OF LESSER RACE FILTH DOES
BRING HIM

ABOVE DECKS HERON!
WE'VE ARRIVED?
WELCOME TO EASTERN LANDS. STEP VERY AND GET YOURSELF DOWN TO THE DOCK
WHAT SHOULD I DO WHEN
LIVELIER, I THINK
UHFF!

ARE YOU HURT THAN?
NO, I DON'T THINK SO
STAND UP BOY
AND HAVE A LOOK AT YOUR HOME FOR THE NEXT YEAR

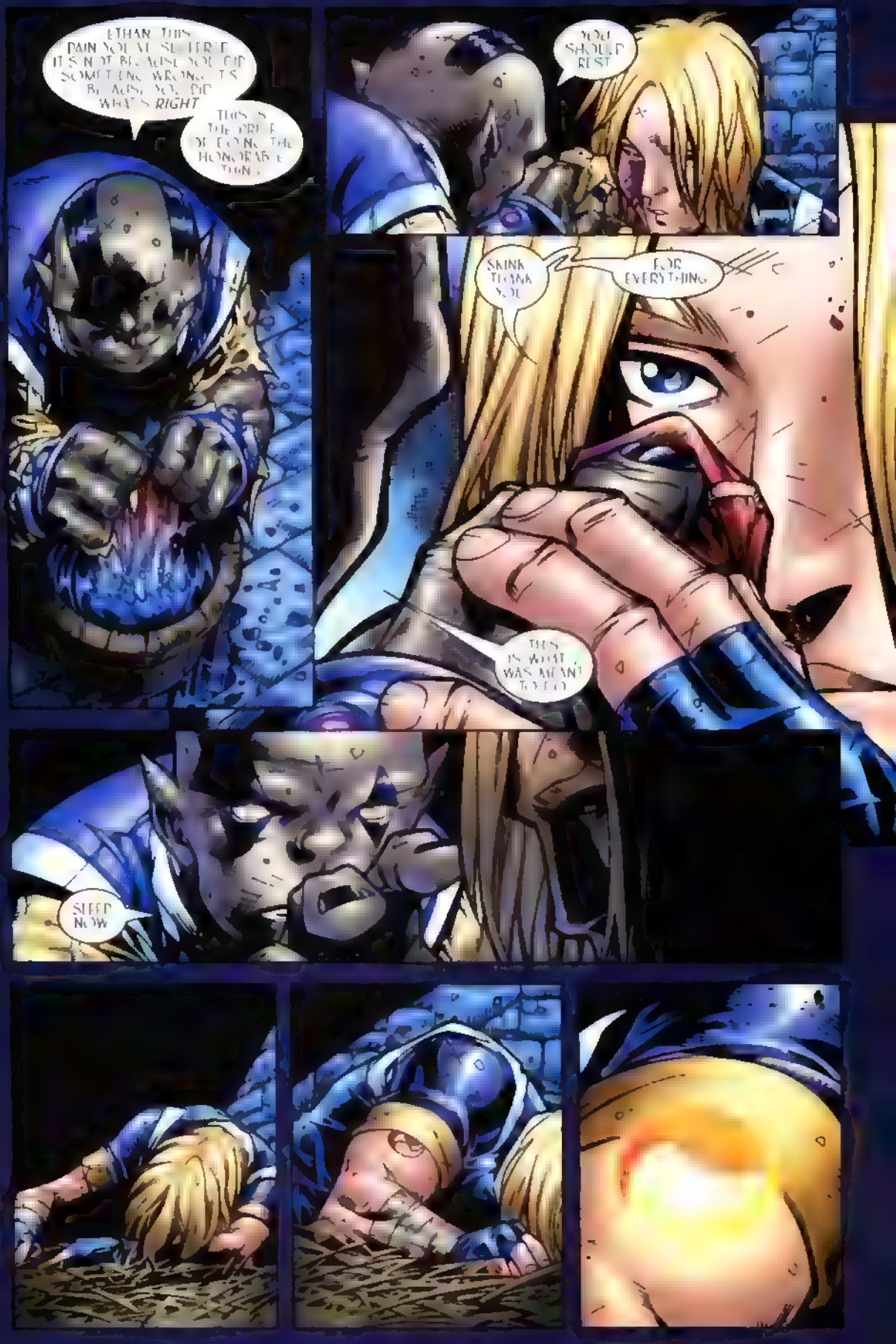
GET!
SKWEE?
SKEEK!
THIS WAY
THE LOWER DUNGEON

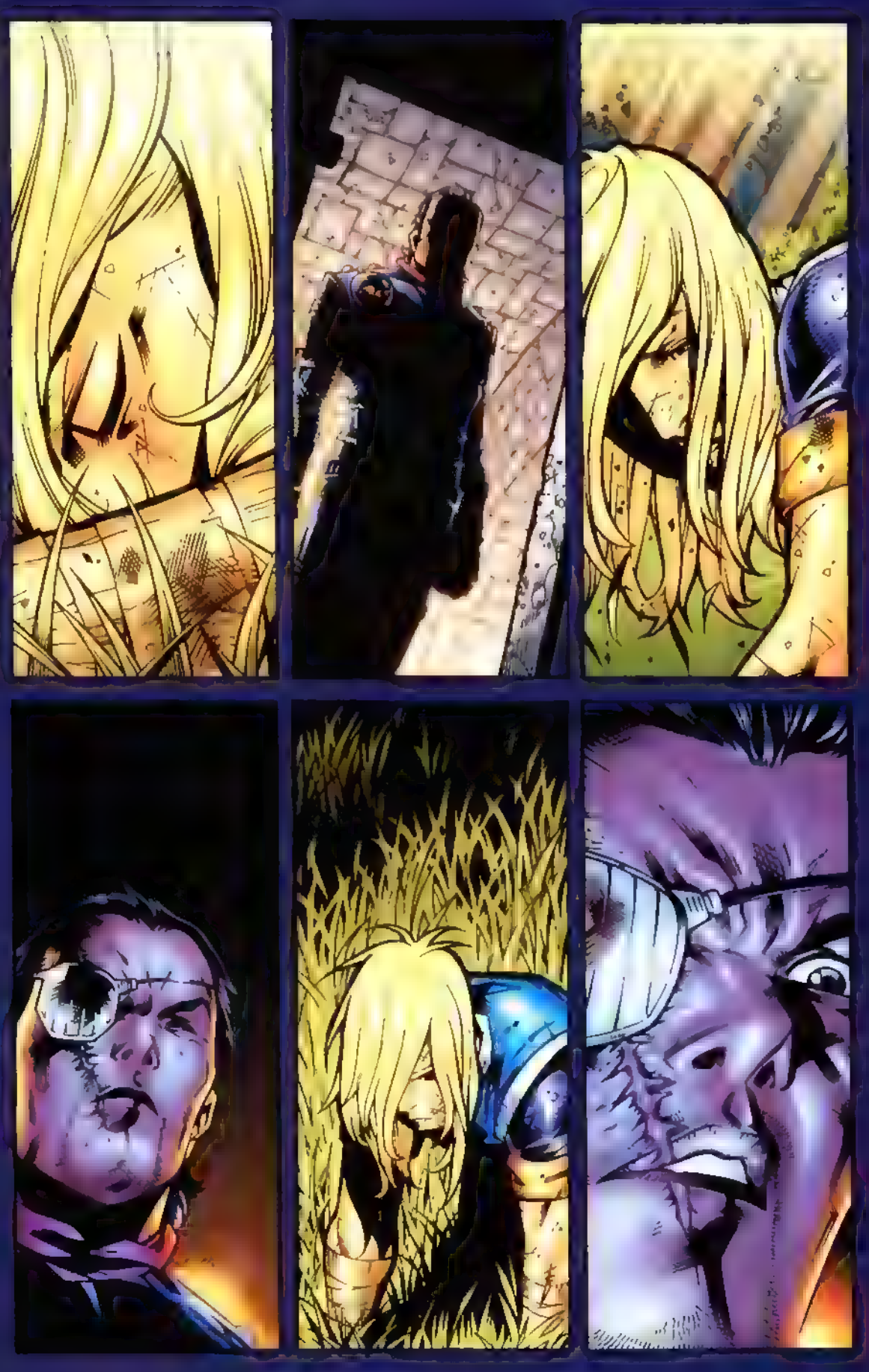

WHO'S THAT?
WAIT WAIT WHO WAS SHE?

I WILL HAVE SATISFACTION
EYAAGH!

YOU'LL HAVE NO ONE TO HEAL YOUR SCAR EITHER
THROW
ON YOUR FEET
IN

UHN!
LET ME LOOK AT HAN. I CAN'T TELL IF THE WOUND IS
PEEP
YOUR RESTRAINT SHOULD HAVE SHUT OFF AUTOMATICALLY. SEE IF YOU CAN REMOVE YOUR HARNESS
THERE'S NOT A GREAT DEAL I CAN DO FOR THE PAIN, BUT I CAN AT LEAST CLEAN IT
THIS IS PROBABLY WHAT I DESERVE, AFTER WHAT I CAUSED
NO. IT'S NOT WHAT YOU DESERVE. BUT WHAT'S DONE IS DONE. NOW YOU MAKE OF IT WHAT YOU CAN
AH!
I'M SORRY. IT'S GOING TO STING


ETHAN, THIS PAIN YOU'VE SUFFERED IT'S NOT BECAUSE YOU DID SOMETHING WRONG. IT'S BECAUSE YOU DID WHAT'S RIGHT
THIS IS THE PRICE OF DOING THE HONORABLE THING.
YOU SHOULD REST
SKINK TIGHA YOU
FOR EVERYTHING
THIS IS WHAT I WAS MEANT TO DO
SLEEP NOW



WHERE IS HE?!
WHERE AM I?

IT'S OKAY ETHAN YOU'RE OKAY
EVEN YOUR FACE
MY FACE? WHAT DO YOU
IT'S HEALED
HOW?
AND HOW DID I GET WHEREVER I AM?
THERE'S WHO CAN GIVE YOU ANSWERS
YOU'RE SAFE OUTSIDE THE KEEP
I BROUGHT YOU HERE I'M THE ONE WHO FREED YOU

MY NAME IS ASHLEIGH

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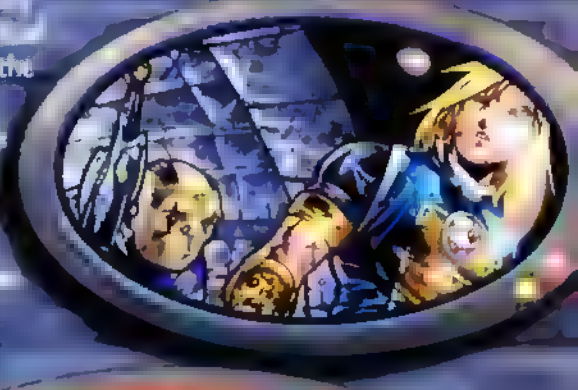
Chaos Far in Scion

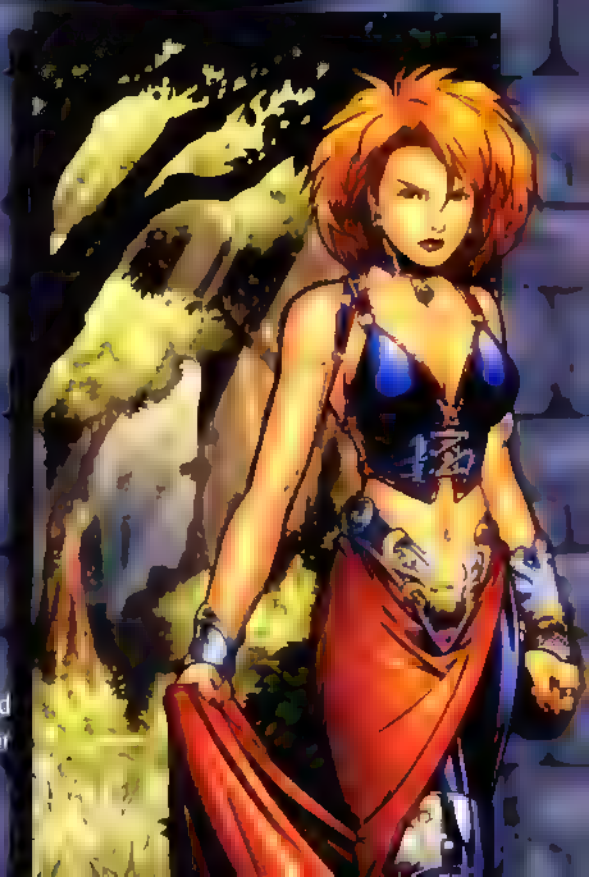
Celebrating [illegible] by participating in the [illegible] combat that maintains the fragile peace between East and West, Prince Ethan [illegible] sigil he neither understands nor is able to control. The sigil's power [illegible] Prince [illegible] of the [illegible]



[illegible] attempt on Ethan's life [illegible] further violence is forestalled by the arrival of Ethan's family. The [illegible] in the slight [illegible] suffered by [illegible] prisoner. The kingdoms come [illegible] Ethan defuses the situation by [illegible] hands for one year. Bidding his [illegible] himself over to [illegible] accompanied only by his Lesser [illegible]

[illegible] Eastern lands, Ethan is taken to the dungeons of the Raven keep, where his attention is drawn to a ginger-haired woman glimpsed only briefly. Ethan's distraction [illegible] revenge by cutting Ethan's face.

[illegible] to find himself not only spirited from the Raven keep altogether, but his wound miraculously healed as well. The woman responsible for Ethan's sudden change in fortune introduces herself as **Ashleigh**...



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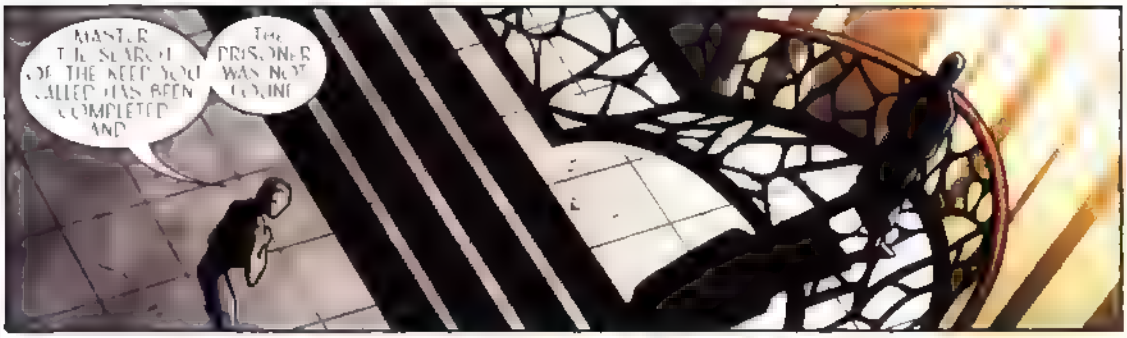
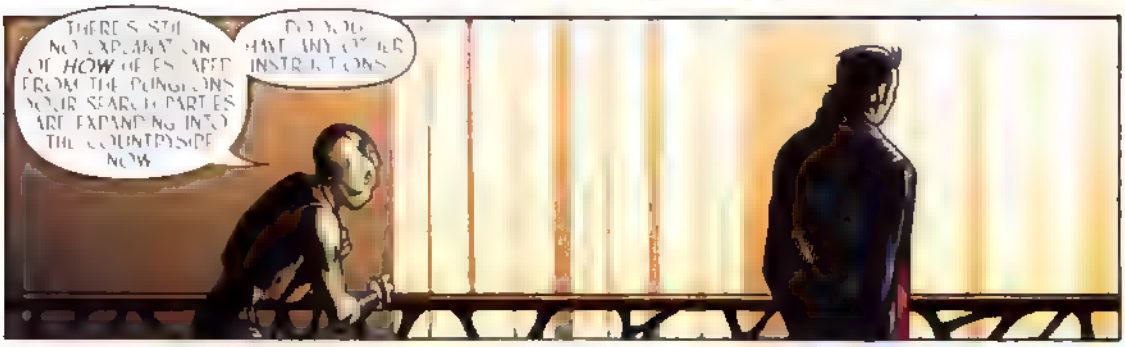
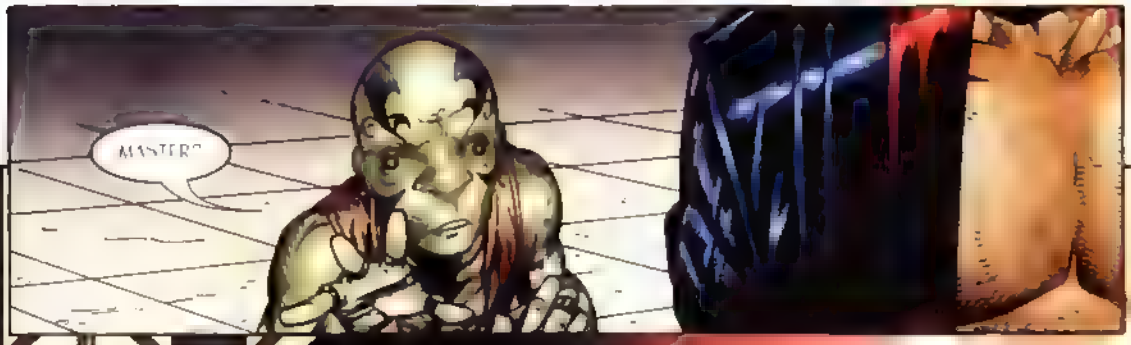
MASTER?

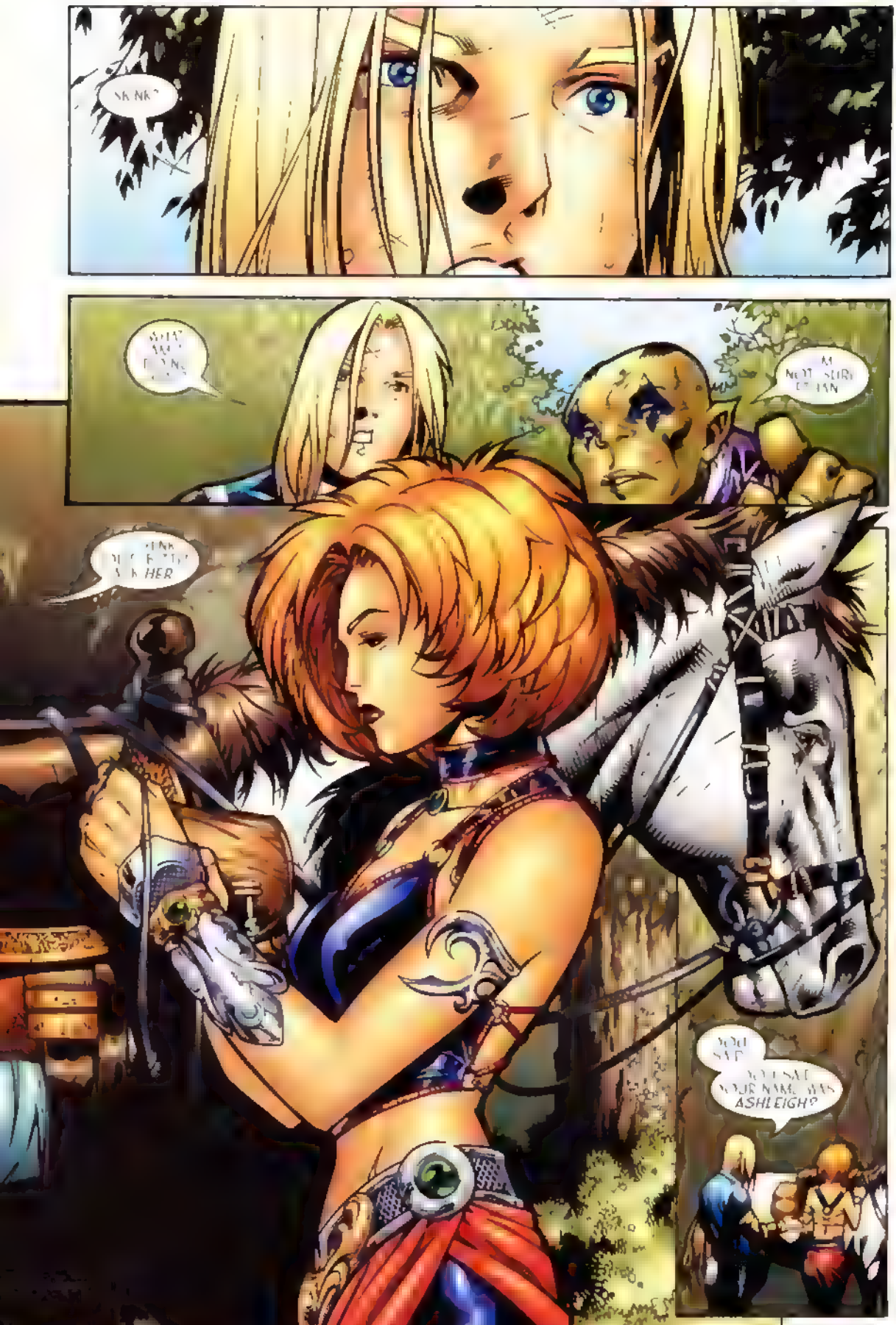

MASTER THE SEARCH OF THE KEEP YOU CALLED HAS BEEN COMPLETED AND
THE PRISONER WAS NOT FOUND

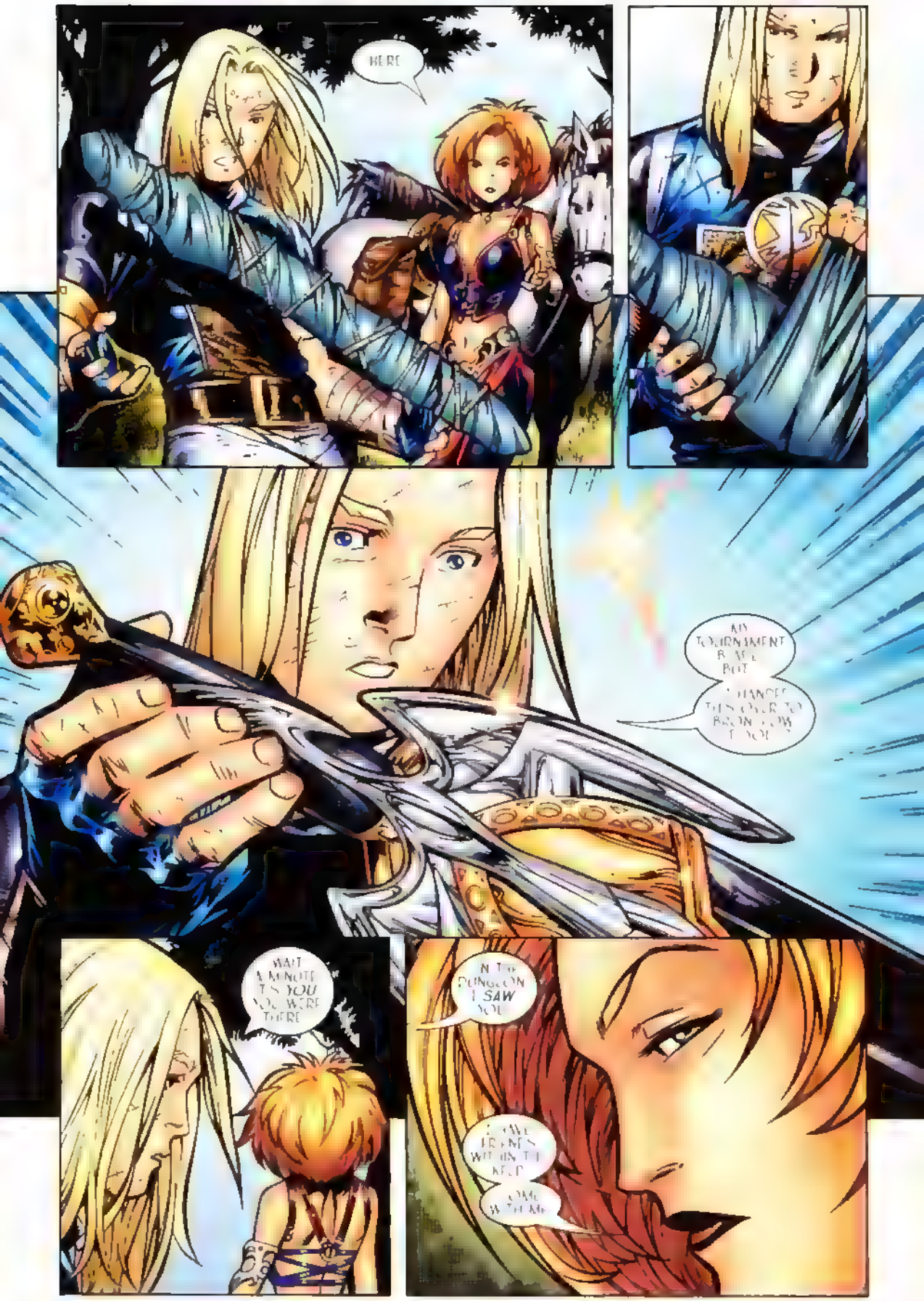

THERE'S STILL NO EXPLANATION OF HOW OR ESCAPED FROM THE DUNGEONS YOUR SEARCH PARTIES ARE EXPANDING INTO THE COUNTRYSIDE NOW
DO YOU HAVE ANY OTHER INSTRUCTIONS

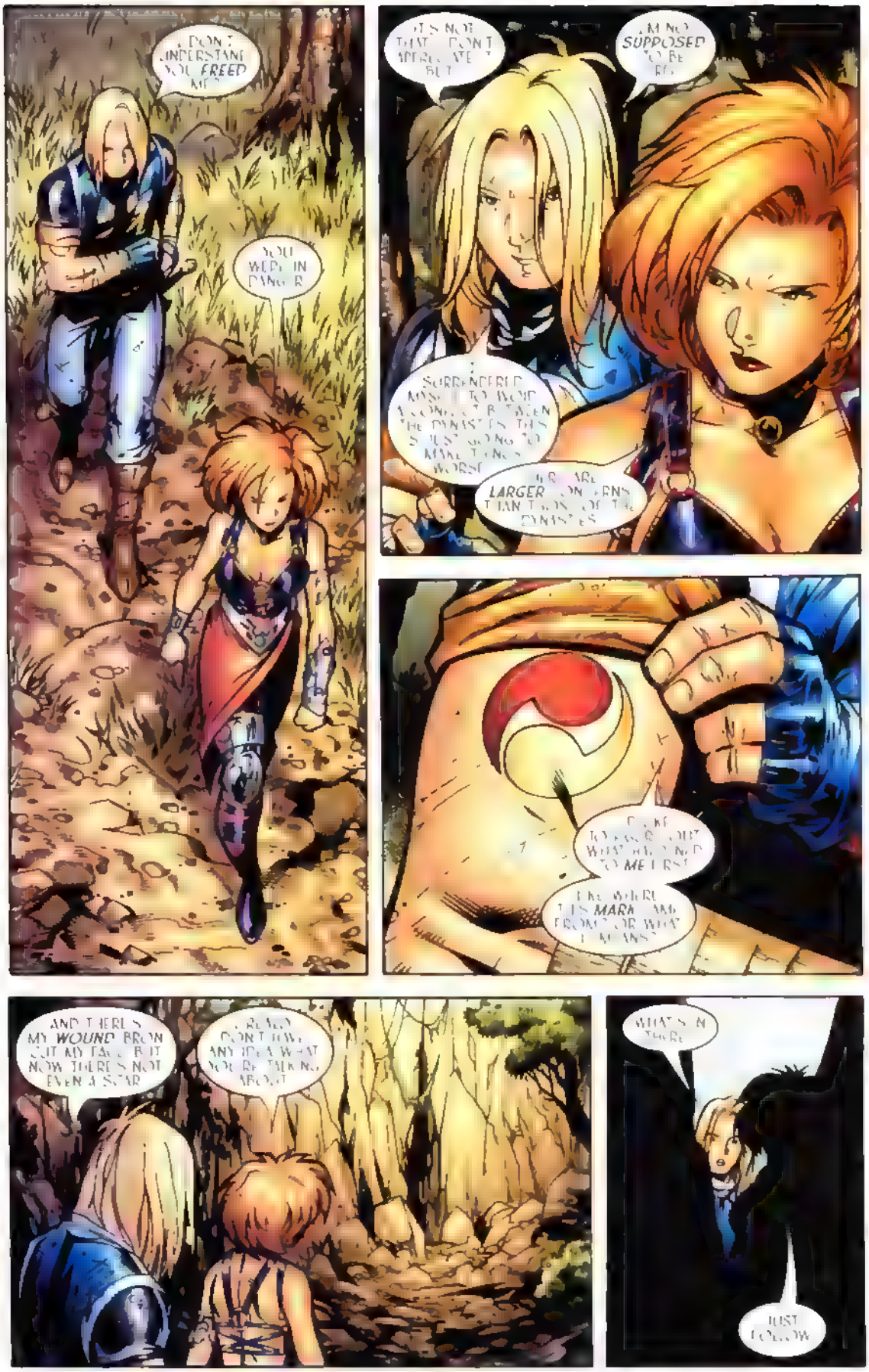

MASTER?

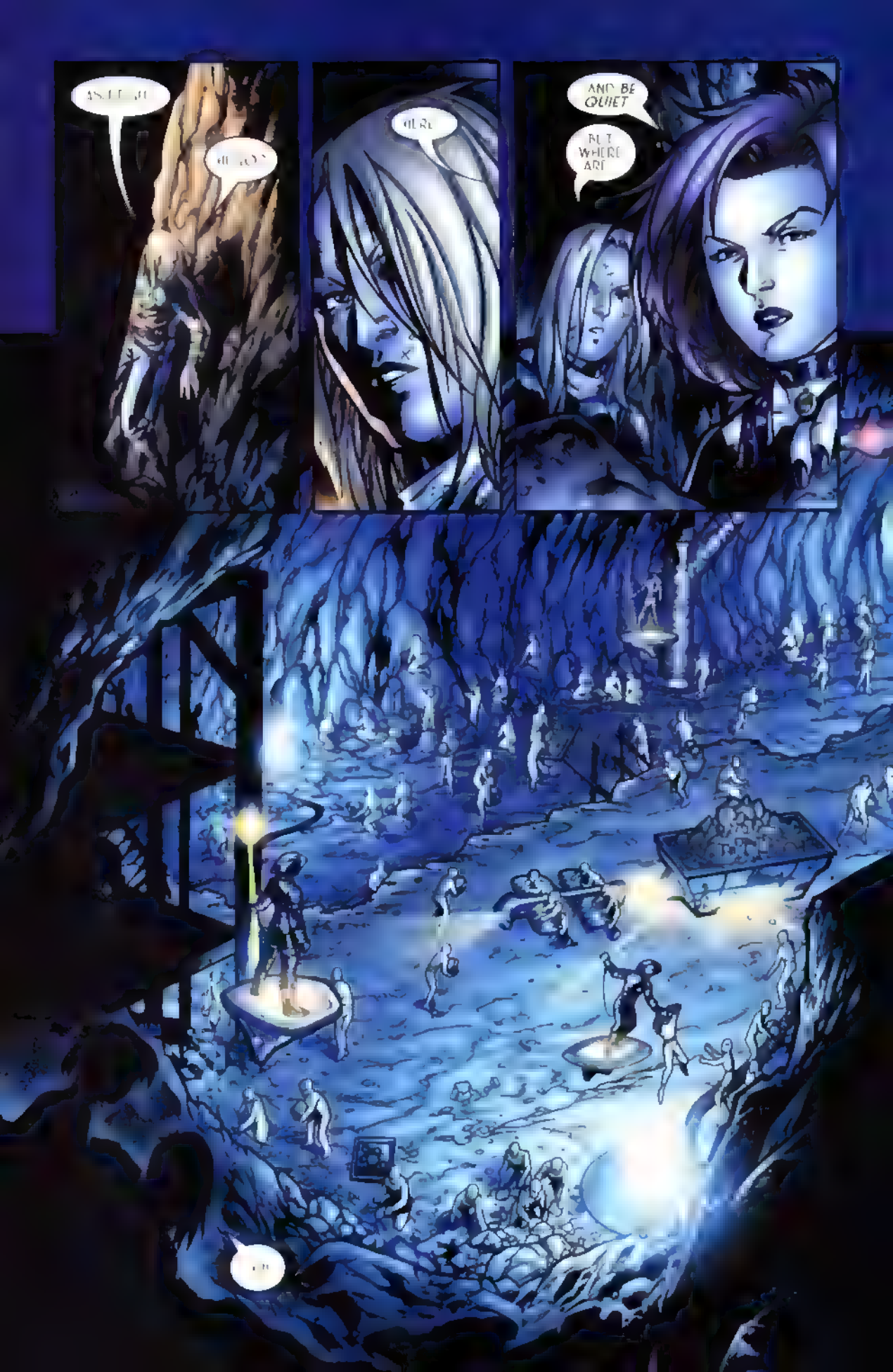
WHY
BOY!
EVERYTHING
NNH
GHF!
YES!

THE WESTERN WHEEL FATHER GONE, LIKE SMOKE INTO THE AIR
SO I'VE HEARD HOW EMBARRASSING FOR YOU
HE SCARS YOU AND THEN HAS THE TEMERITY TO ESCAPE
BATTLEFIELD
PLANNED
HE'S OUT THERE SOMEWHERE


ASHLEIGH?


HERE
MY TOURNAMENT
BUT
WAIT A MINUTE IT'S YOU YOU WERE THERE
IN THE DUNGEON I SAW YOU

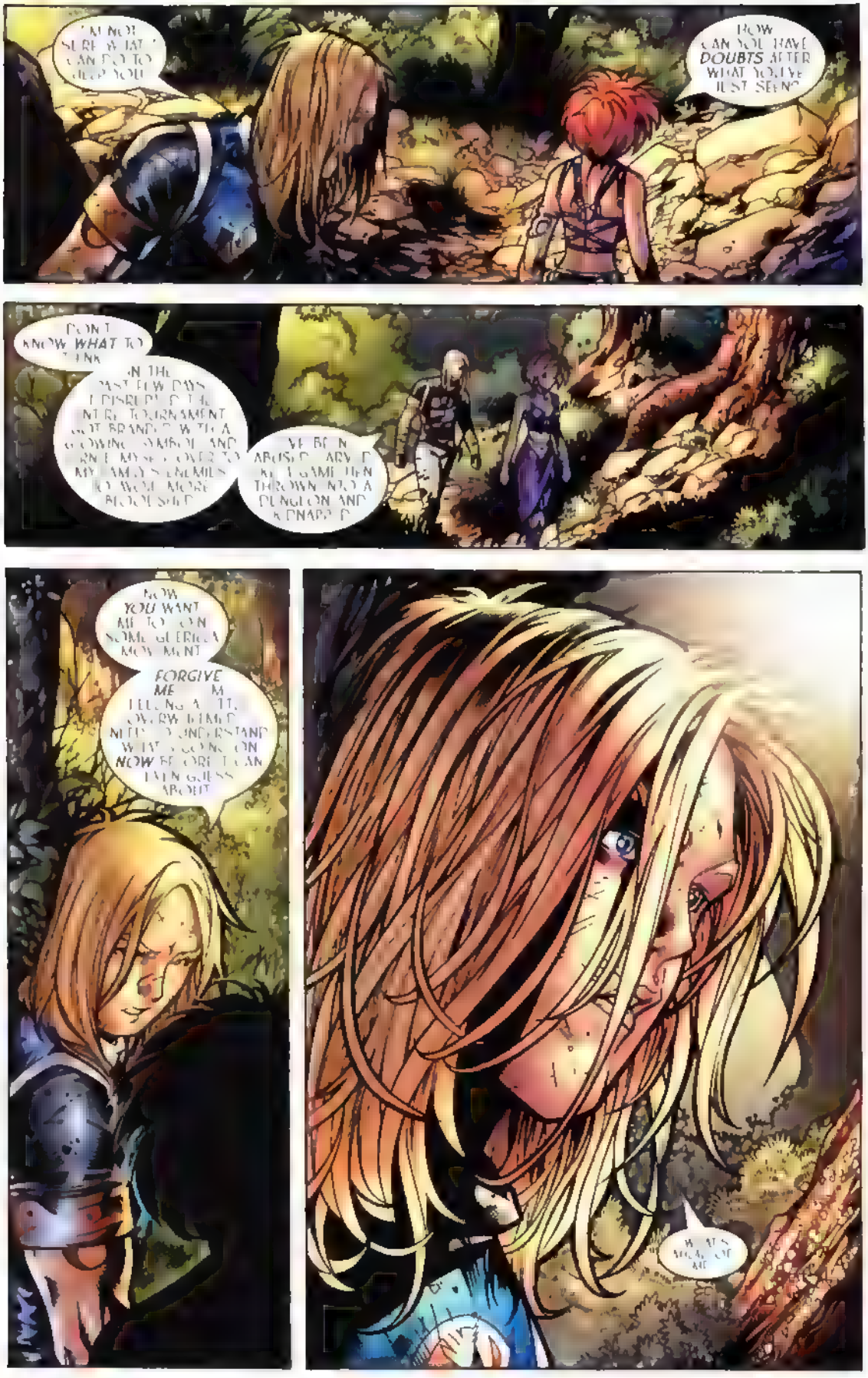

I DON'T UNDERSTAND YOU FREED ME?
YOU WERE IN DANGER
IT'S NOT THAT I DON'T APPRECIATE IT BUT
I'M NO SUPPOSED TO BE
I SURRENDERED MYSELF TO WOID A CONFLICT BETWEEN THE DYNASTIES. THIS IS JUST GOING TO MAKE THINGS WORSE
LARGER CONCERNS THAN THOSE OF THE DYNASTIES
I'LL KEEP TO FIGURE OUT WHAT HAPPENED TO ME FIRST
I'LL WHERE THIS MARK CAME FROM OR WHAT IT MEANS?
AND THERE'S MY WOUND BRON CUT MY FACE BUT NOW THERE'S NOT EVEN A SCAR
I REALLY DON'T HAVE ANY IDEA WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT
WHAT'S IN THERE
JUST FOLLOW


AND BE QUIET
BUT WHERE ARE

WHAT IS THIS PLACE
HUH
IT'S WHERE THE LESSER RACES ARE WORKED TO THE LAST BREATH TO BE MINING CORE
TRAPPED IN SORCERESS' WARPS GUARDS READY TO PUT THEM BACK TO THEIR BASICS
BUT THEY WOULD COST AS EASILY BE TO ENGINEER SOMETHING WORKING AT LESS THAN UNUSUAL
IT'S A CYCLE THEY WORK IN CHAINS AND THEY'RE WORKED UNTIL THEY DROP TO BE REPLACED BY ANOTHER
ISN'T OUR SCIENCE GLORIOUS
IT'S ALL WELL AS SO MUCH DISPOSABLE LIFE
THE LESSER RACES WERE SENT AWAY ENGINEERS SO WE WOULDN'T HAVE TO GET OUR HANDS DIRTY
WE BRED THEM TO BE JUST WHAT WE NEEDED TO BE A NEW KIND OF PERSON
AND NOW WE CONSIDER THEM LESS THAN HUMAN

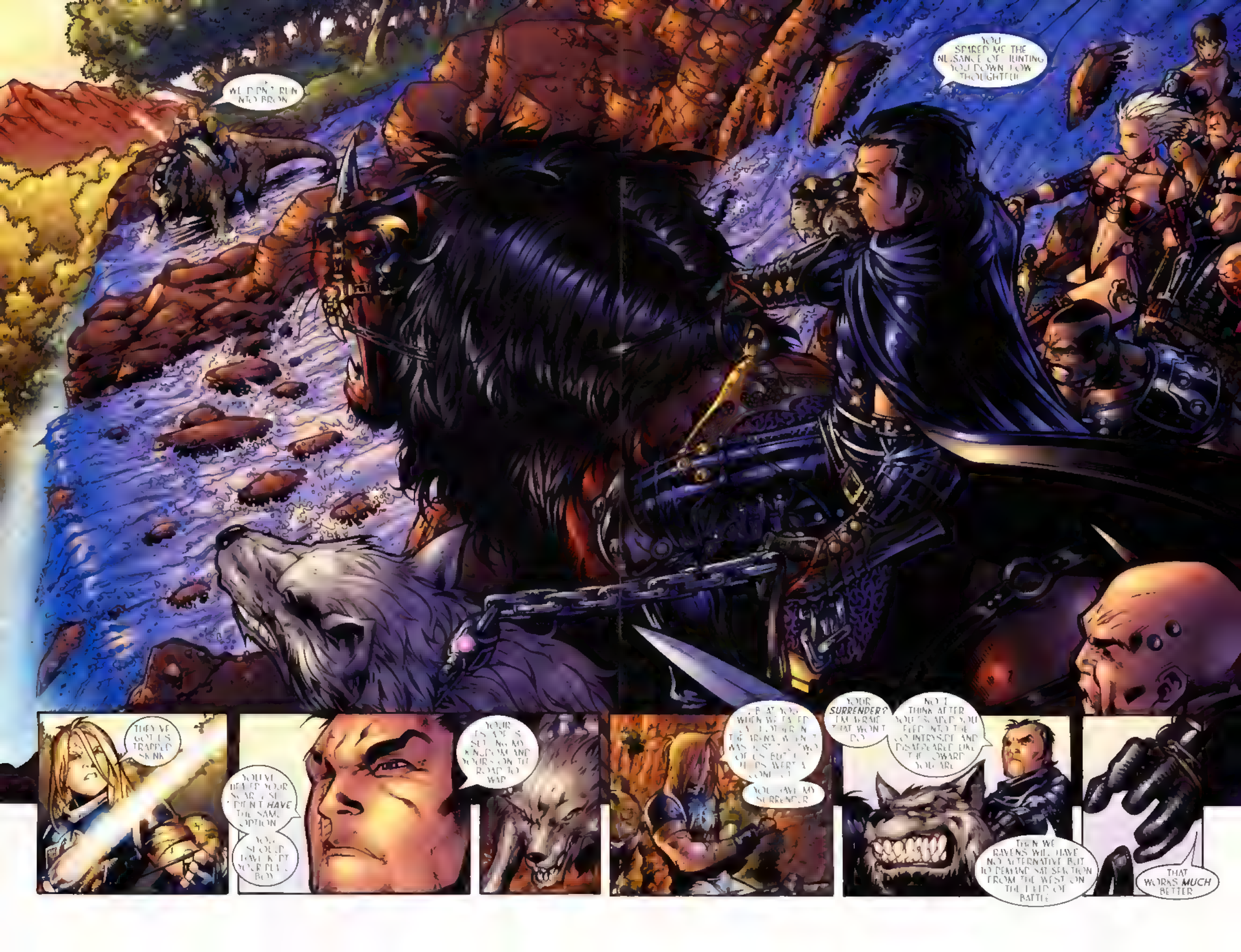
YOU MEAN THEY'RE
SLAVES
NOW'S THAT WHEN POSSIBLE WE'VE NEVER MADE SLAVES OF THE LESSER RACES IN THE WEST
NO, I'M NOT JUST YOUR SERVANTS THEY DO THE THINGS YOU TAUNT ME BENEATH YOU!
SERVANTS IN THE WEST SLAVES IN THE EAST YOU'RE ONE TRULY ADAPTABLE
I'M PART OF A GROUP THAT MEANS TO PUT AN END TO IT WE WANT FREEDOM FOR THE LESSER RACES EQUALITY
WE'D RATHER IT WAS ACCOMPLISHED PEACEFULLY BUT WE'LL USE ANY MEANS NECESSARY
PEOPLE HAVE STARTED JOINING US THE UNDERGROUND
I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT UNDERSTAND OUR CAUSE BECAUSE YOU TOO SEE THE LESSER TO SERVE AS YOUR SECOND IN THE TOURNAMENT WE NEED YOUR HELP THAT'S WHY I FREED YOU
WE NEED SOMEONE IN THE WEST SOMEONE WHO'S NOT WELL KNOWN AND BESIDES I'VE NEED A FEARED PEOPLE WILL FOLLOW
I AM
NOT READY GIRL HOW CAN
NNGH!

BACK TO WORK!
PLEASE MY CHILD
AHG!
NO!
NO!


HOW CAN YOU HAVE DOUBTS AFTER WHAT YOU'VE JUST SEEN?
DON'T KNOW WHAT TO THINK
IN THE PAST FEW DAYS I DISRUPTED THE ENTIRE TOURNAMENT GOT BRANDED WITH A GLOWING SYMBOL AND
THROWN INTO A DUNGEON AND KIDNAPPED
NOW YOU WANT ME TO JOIN SOME GUERILLA MOVEMENT
FORGIVE ME
NOW BEFORE I CAN EVEN GUESS ABOUT

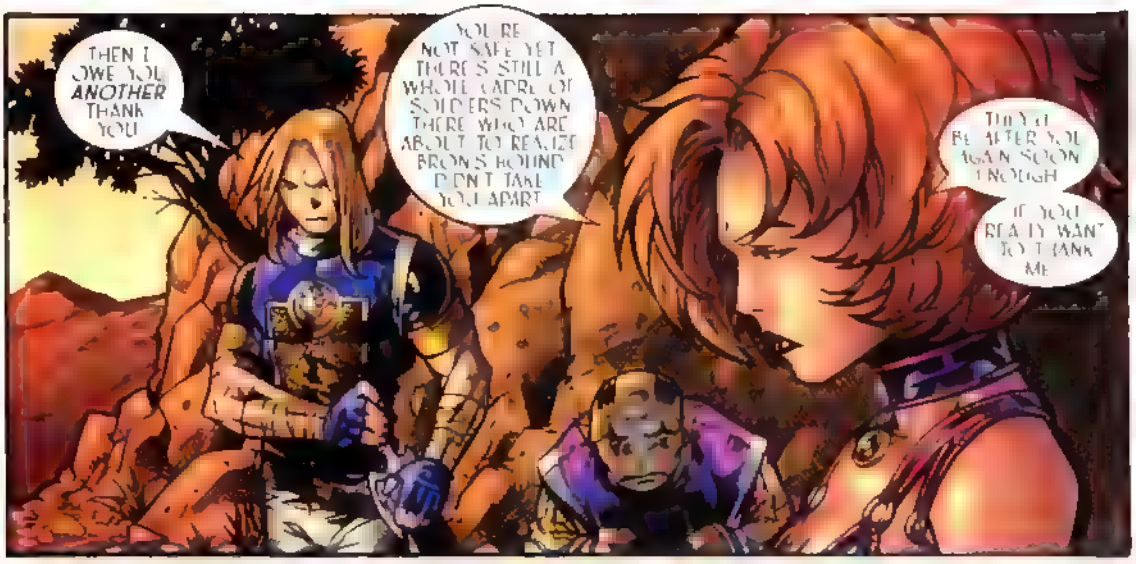
HIM!
LET
HIM

GO!
SPAK
GHN!
HOLD TIGHT SKINK!
I DON'T KNOW GONE


WE DIDN'T RUN INTO BRON
YOU SPARED ME THE NUISANCE OF HUNTING YOU DOWN. HOW THOUGHTFUL
THEY'VE GOT US TRAPPED SKINK
YOU'VE HEALED YOUR SCAR. I SUPPLIED IT HAVE THE SAME OPTION
YOU SHOULD HAVE KEPT YOUR PLACE BOY
YOUR ESCAPE IS SETTING MY KINGDOM AND YOURS ON THE ROAD TO WAR
YOU HAVE MY SURRENDER
YOUR SURRENDER? I'M AFRAID THAT WON'T DO
NO. I THINK AFTER YOU ESCAPED YOU FLED INTO THE COUNTRYSIDE AND DISAPPEARED LIKE THE COWARD YOU ARE
THEN WE RAVENS WILL HAVE NO ALTERNATIVE BUT TO DEMAND SATISFACTION FROM THE WEST ON THE FIELD OF BATTLE
THAT WORKS MUCH BETTER

GRRARGH!
HANG ON,
RRARR
RRFF?

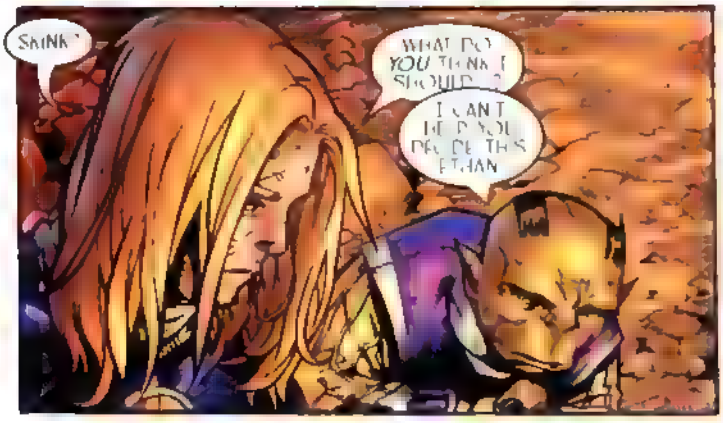
BUT
YOU RUN ALONG NOW OKAY?
AN MAIS LIKE ME

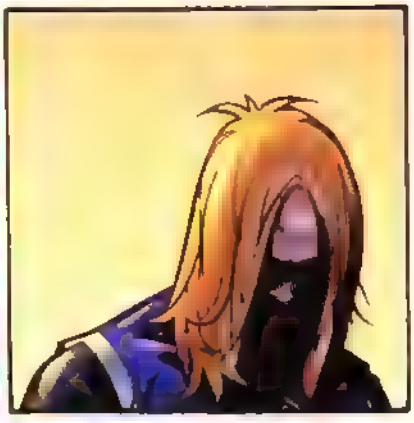

THEN I OWE YOU ANOTHER THANK YOU
YOU'RE NOT SAFE YET THERE'S STILL A WHOLE CADRE OF SOLDIERS DOWN THERE WHO ARE ABOUT TO REALIZE BROWN'S BEHIND DIDN'T TAKE YOU APART
THEY'LL BE AFTER YOU AGAIN SOON ENOUGH
IF YOU REALLY WANT TO THANK ME

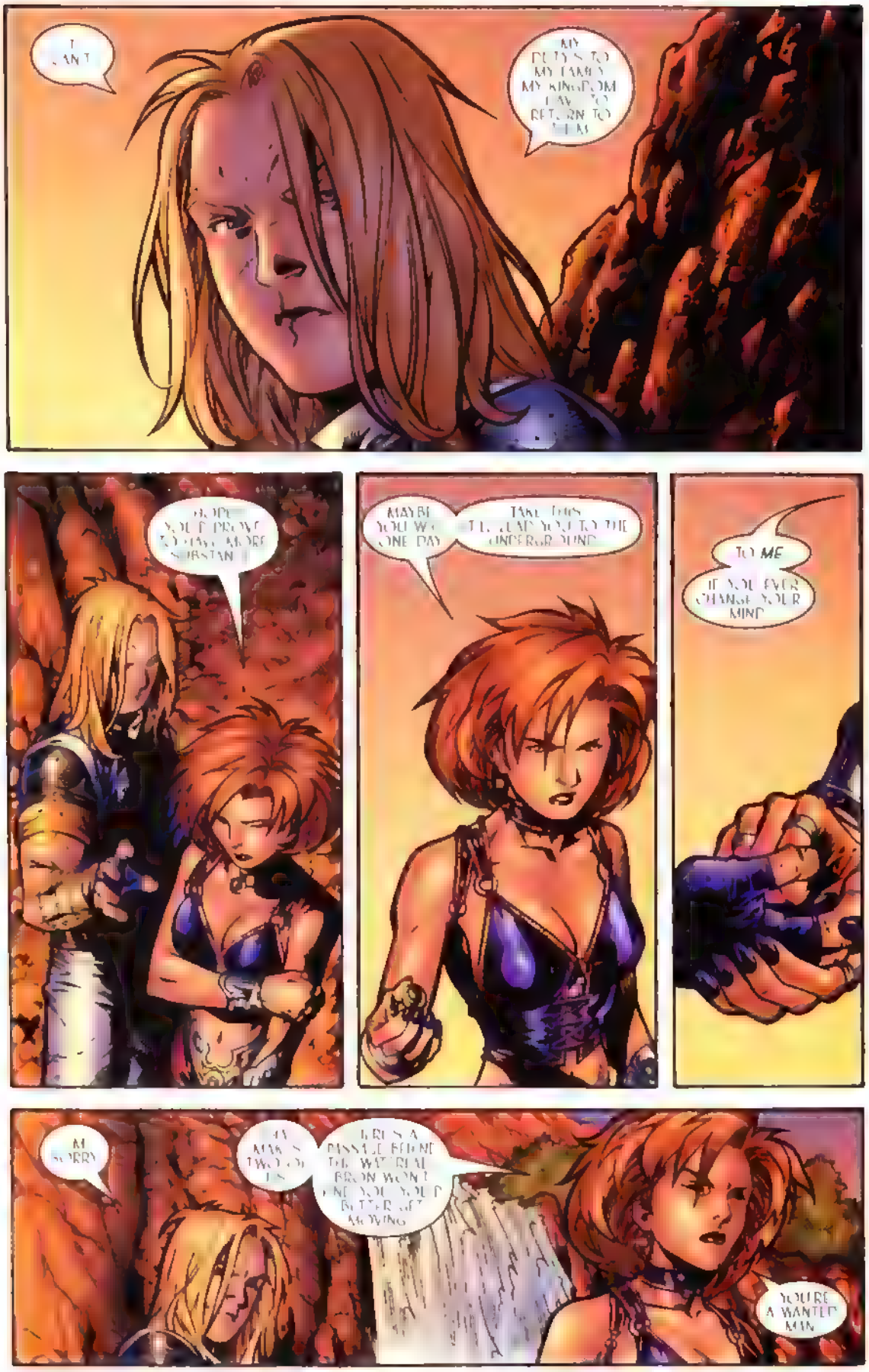
JOIN ME IN THE UNDERGROUND
I CAN TAKE YOU TO THEM RIGHT NOW
I DON'T KNOW THAT I CAN

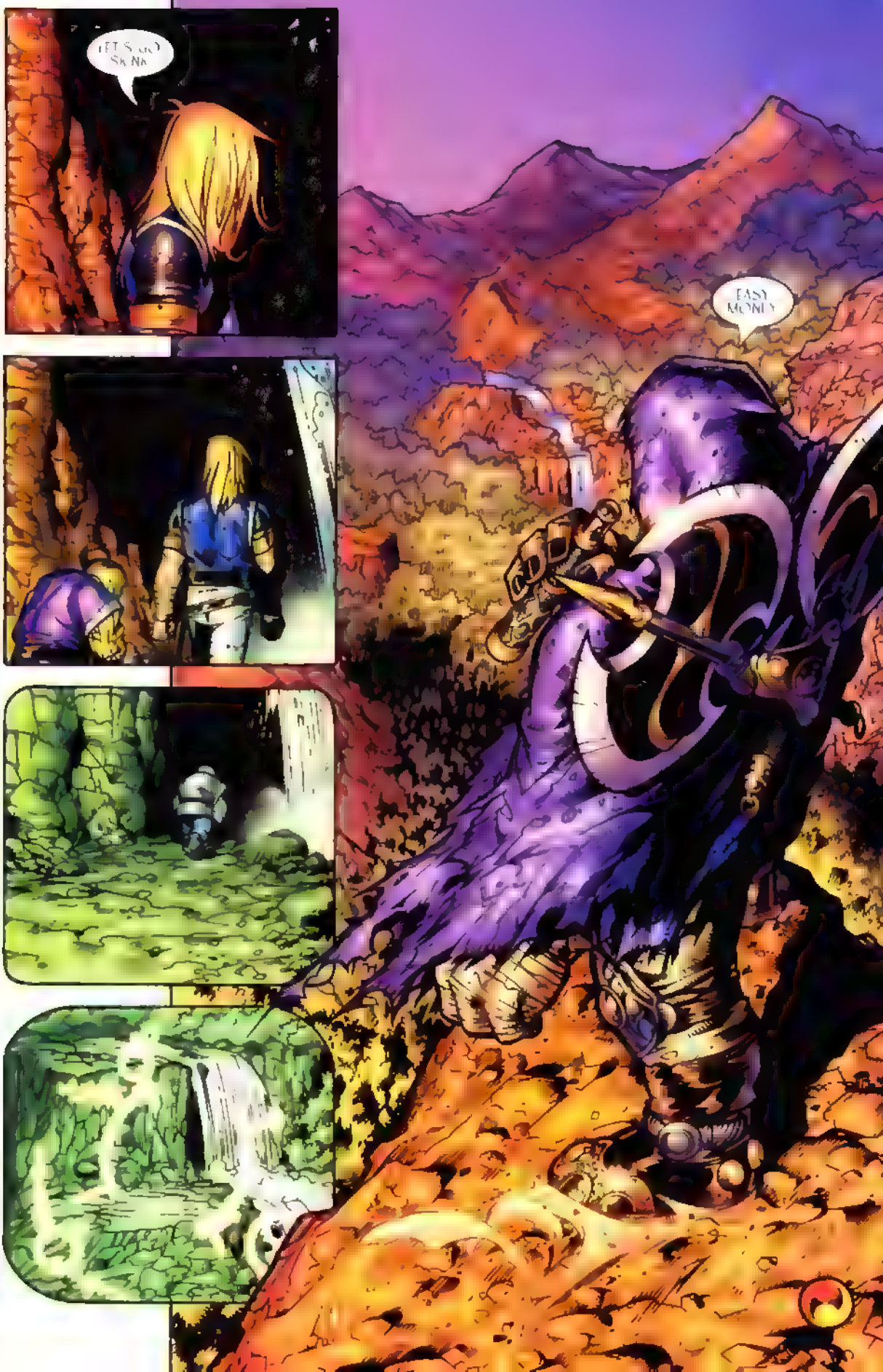
WHY NOT? YOU'VE LED A LIFE OF PRIVILEGE DON'T YOU THINK IT'S TIME YOU HELPED THOSE WHO HAVEN'T?
THERE MIGHT BE A WAR BECAUSE OF ME SURRENDERING MYSELF WON'T HELP THEY'LL JUST KILL ME AND SAY I ESCAPED
THE ONLY THING I CAN DO IS TO GET BACK HOME AND PROVE THESE RAVEN SCUM ARE INVENTING A CONFLICT
I HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO MY FAMILY
YOUR FAMILY

WHAT ABOUT HIM? ISN'T HE A PART OF YOUR FAMILY?


SHINK
WHAT DO YOU THINK I SHOULD...?
I CAN'T HELP YOU DECIDE THIS ETHAN




MY DUTY'S TO MY FAMILY MY KINGDOM
MAYBE YOU WE ONE DAY
TAKE THIS
TO ME
IF YOU EVER CHANGE YOUR MIND
YOU'RE A WANTED MAN


EASY MONEY

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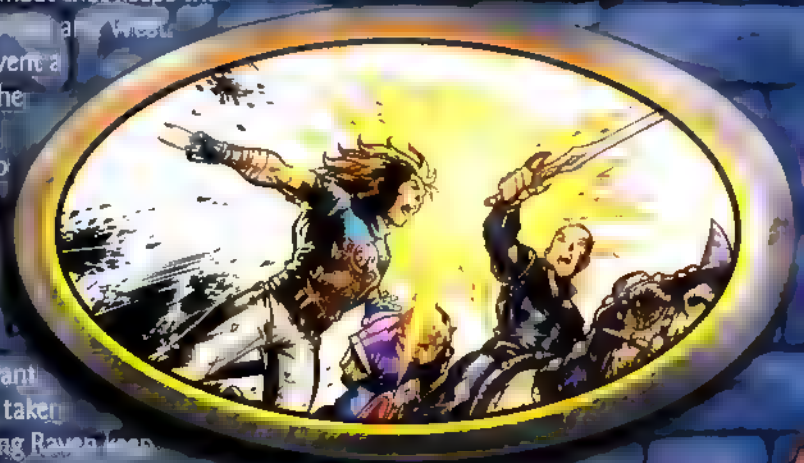
Thus Far in Scion

Prince Ethan of the West-ruling [illegible] Dynasty still does [illegible] understand the red-and-yellow sigil now gracing his [illegible] right [illegible] has [illegible] changed [illegible] he received the sigil moments before [illegible] into the [illegible] there [illegible] accidentally [illegible] a prince of the rival Raven [illegible] in the ritual combat that keeps the [illegible] and West. In order to prevent a war between the rival dynasties, Ethan agrees to become a prisoner of the Ravens. Accompanied only by his friend and servant Skink, Ethan is taken to the forbidding Raven keep.



[illegible] spirited from the Eastern Dungeon by a mysterious woman calling herself Ashleigh. She reveals to Ethan the [illegible] the [illegible] created beings who [illegible] Ashleigh invites Ethan [illegible] the Underground, an organization [illegible] the plight of the Lesser [illegible] Ethan can make a decision, Ashleigh seemingly deserts [illegible] Bron himself. Narrowly escaping, Ethan [illegible] Ashleigh [illegible]

[illegible] Ethan declines Ashleigh's offer [illegible] to return to his family. The disappointed [illegible] explaining it will help him to find her, Ethan and Skink depart, heading into the hostile [illegible] to Ethan, a brutish cloaked [illegible]

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THEY FOUND US!

ETHAN WE WILL GET NOWHERE TO GO

YET

GET READY

BRONS ANXIOUS TO SEE YOU AGAIN HERON

THOUGH I DOUBT YOUR *NEXT* STAY IN RAVEN KEEP WILL BE AS PLEASANT

OR AS BRIEF

LAST TIME! EVER

PWUH

AH!

...GO, SHINK!

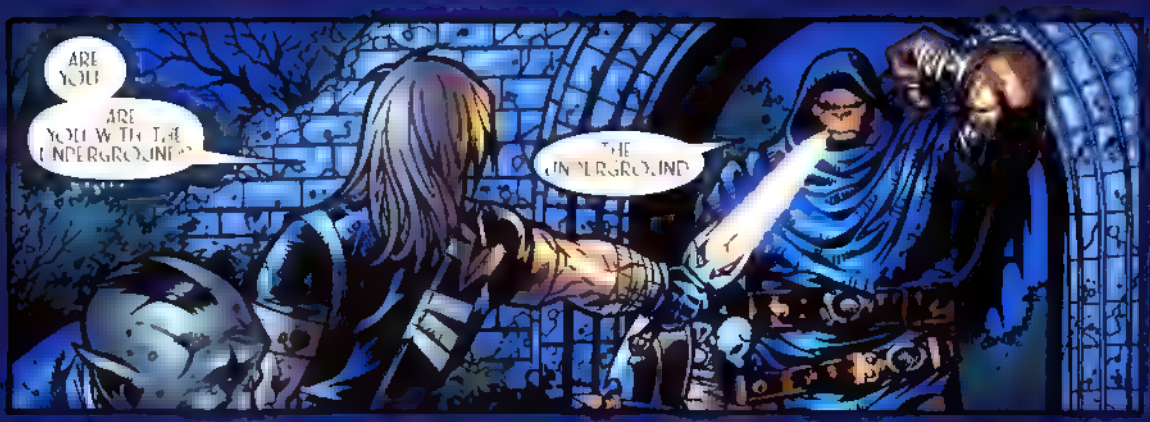
BED DOWN FOR THE NIGHT

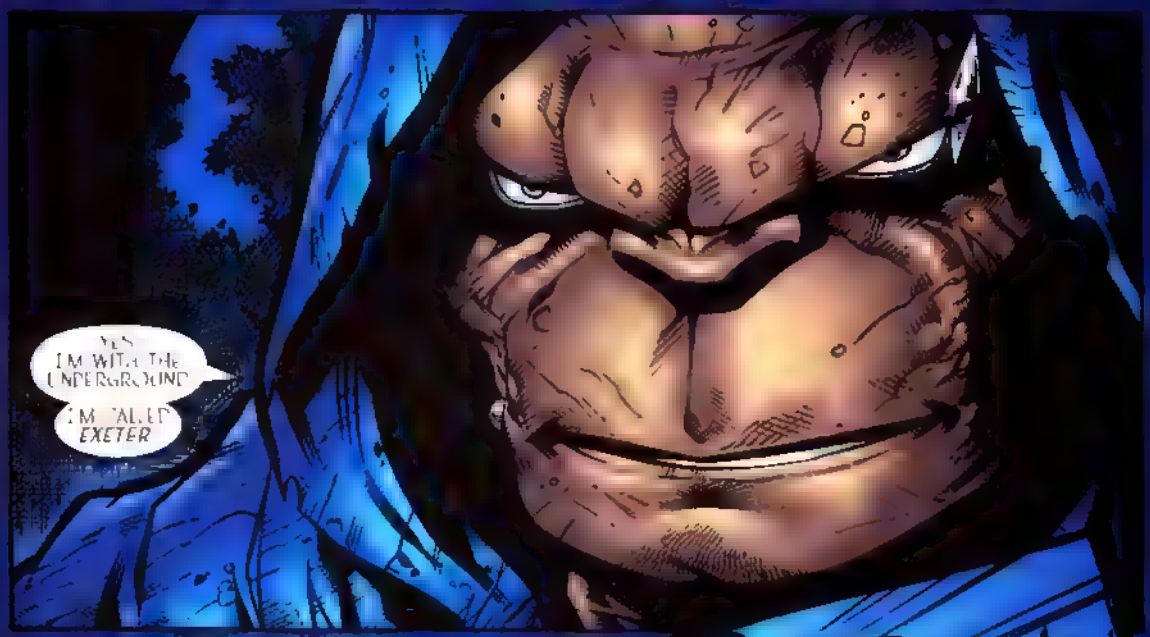
IN AN ABANDONED CAST...

OUTSIDE,
WE DIDN'T
KAFF
DIDN'T
COME ALONE
BOY!

WEREN'T EXPECTING YOUR ESCAPE ROUTE TO BE BLOCKED? WHAT SORT OF FOOLS DO YOU TAKE US FOR, BOY?
WHATEVER TRICKS YOU USED IN THE TOURNAMENT
WON'T SAVE YOU HERE
URK
WHAT
GUK

WOULDN'T DO TO HAVE *THEM* GET THEIR HANDS ON YOU!
THEM
SPLUTCH
OR THE ONES WHO WERE INSIDE


ARE YOU
ARE YOU WITH THE UNDERGROUND?
THE UNDERGROUND


YES I'M WITH THE UNDERGROUND
I'M CALLED EXETER

ETHAN I'M NOT SURE
OOK I ALREADY TOLE ASHLEIGH I CAN'T

GUHH!
WHUD

MOST OF THE BOUNTIES I BRING IN ARE CORPSES BUT BRONS PAYING HANDSOMELY TO HAVE YOU DELIVERED ALIVE
I CAN IMAGINE HIS PLANS FOR YOU
ETHAN!
FLEA
FWAK
AFF!
I HEARD TALES OF YOUR VICTORY IN THE TOURNAMENT ARENA FRANKLY, YOU DON'T SEEM LIKE ENOUGH OF A WARRIOR TO -
RRRUMBLE

KRAK
KARUMBLE
HNIF
SKINK
THANK YOU
YOU ARE WELC
GUESS SO
AS MUCH AS I CAN BE AFTER HAVING A WALL NEARLY COLLAPSE ON ME
IT'S ALMOST MORNING
WE SHOULD GO BEFORE MORE OF BRONS SOLDIERS ARRIVE

THAT WAS MY FAU
EVERYONE ON THIS SIDE OF THE GREAT OCEAN IS LOOKING FOR US

AND MY FIRST REACTION WAS TO ASSUME THE BOUNTY HUNTER WAS WITH THE UNDERGROUND JUST BECAUSE HE WAS OF THE LESSER RACES
I HAVE TO BE A LOT MORE CAREFUL IF I'M GOING TO GET US HOME
IT'S A MISTAKE ANYONE COULD HAVE MADE IT, AN

IT'S A MISTAKE ANYONE WHO'S THINKING TOO MUCH ABOUT THE UNDERGROUND COULD HAVE MADE
AFTER WHAT I SAW AFTER WHAT ASHLEIGH SHOWED ME IN THE MINES

ASHLEIGH ASKED FOR MY HELP BECAUSE THE LESSER RACES ARE SLAVES IN THE EAST

AND I TURNED HER DOWN

YOU UNDERSTAND WHY I DO THAT, RIGHT SKRA?
I UNDERSTAND YOU HAVE A GREAT DEAL OF RESPONSIBILITY ON YOUR SHOULDERS

I'VE TOLD YOU THIS BEFORE ETHAN. YOU DIDN'T *ASK* FOR WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU. I'M SORRY ABOUT THAT.
IN MANY WAYS THE PATH YOU FOLLOW HAS BEEN TAKEN OUT OF YOUR HANDS. YOUR DESTINY'S NOT YOUR OWN ANYMORE.
YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT THE MARK I HAVE?
I KNOW IT GRANTS *POWER*. SOME HOW... I EVEN HEALED MY FACE WHEN BRON CUT ME.
IT'S CHANGED MY LIFE.
BUT I STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT IT REALLY IS.
I THINK IT CAN BE WHAT YOU MAKE OF IT. A GIFT *OR* A CURSE.
WELL EITHER WAY I HOPE IT MIGHT MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THIS WAR THE RAVENS WANT TO START.
THOUGH IF WE CAN GET TO A BOAT AND MAKE OUR WAY HOME, MAYBE WAR CAN *STILL* BE AVERTED.
YOU THINK THAT'S THE RIGHT THING TO DO, SKINK? GOING HOME?
ETHAN...

YOU'RE DOING WHAT *YOU* THINK'S RIGHT THAT'S WHAT MATTERS
DO YOU REMEMBER WHEN YOU WERE A BOY? YOU COULDN'T HAVE BEEN MORE THAN SEVEN PERHAPS EIGHT
ONE YEAR WHEN THE SNOWS CAME A STABLE COLLAPSED AND YOUR FATHER'S PRIZE STALLION ESCAPED INTO A BLIZZARD
YOU KNEW YOUR FATHER LOVED THAT HORSE SO YOU WENT SEARCHING FOR IT EVEN THOUGH YOU'D BEEN FORBIDDEN TO DO SO
YOU WERE LOST FOR A DAY AND NIGHT IN A STORM SO FIERCE YOU COULDN'T SEE FIVE FEET FOR THE BLOWING SNOW OR BE HEARD FOR THE HOWL OF THE WIND
YOUR PARENTS NEARLY GAVE UP HOPE WHEN YOU COULDN'T BE FOUND A BOY THAT AGE OUT IN CONDITIONS LIKE THAT BUT YOU DID COME HOME, AND WHEN YOU DID
YOU WERE RIDING YOUR FATHER'S STALLION
THANKS SHANK, YOU'VE ALWAYS BEEN THERE WHEN I NEEDED YOU EVEN IF I DON'T *KNOW* I NEEDED YOU
HOPE YOU UNDERSTAND HOW MUCH THAT MEANS TO ME
I'VE ALWAYS WATCHED OVER YOU ETHAN
I ALWAYS WI

WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO REACH THE VILLAGE DOWN THERE BEFORE THE SUN IS FULLY UP AND THIS FOG BURNS OFF
THEN WE JUST FIND A HOVERSHIP AND SLIP AWAY WITH IT I'M PRETTY SURE I CAN PILOT ONE WELL ENOUGH TO CROSS THE GREAT SEA AND GET US
oh
Oh no

THE FLEET

THE RAVEN FLEET

SKINA THEY'RE GOING TO *INVADE!*

THEY MUST'VE BEEN PLANNING THIS ALL ALONG

THERE'S NO WAY THEY COULD'VE GATHERED THAT KIND OF FORCE IN ONLY THE TIME SINCE I ESCAPED

WE HAVE TO GET DOWN TO THE DOCKS. WE HAVE TO GET A *SHIP* RIGHT NOW

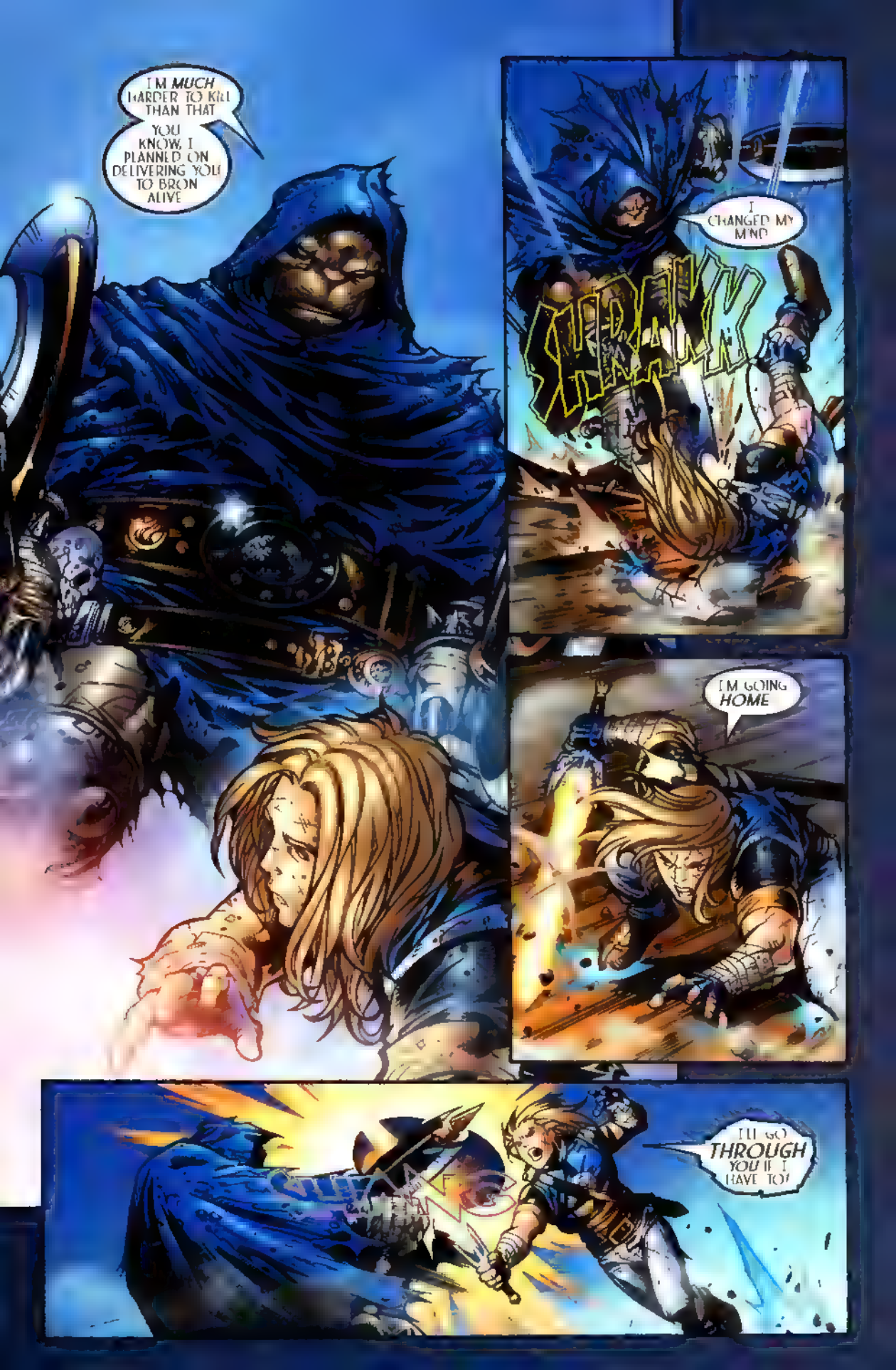
I NEED TO WARN MY FAMILY THIS IS COMING

THERE'S AN ENTIRE ARMY DOWN THERE. ETHAN ARE YOU SURE WALKING RIGHT INTO THE MIDST OF IT IS THE WISEST PLAN?

WHAT ELSE DO YOU EXPECT ME TO DO?

HO!
STAND AND BE RECOGNIZED! WHO APPROACHES?
NO ONE, SIRE
ONLY A SERVANT BEARING A MESSAGE FROM BRON
BRON *HIMSELF*? WHY WOULD HE SEND A SLAVE TO DELIVER–
GHN!
CHONK
I'M FAIRLY CERTAIN NO ONE ELSE HEARD, BUT LET'S BE QUICK ABOUT THIS ALL THE SAME
ANY OF THE SHIPS HERE WILL SERVE
YOU THERE!

WHO ARE YOU? WHAT'S YOUR BUSINESS WITH THE SCOUT SHIP?
STEALING IT
PWHH!
WHAT'S YOUR BUSINESS WITH THE SCOUT SHIP?
SKINK! THESE ARE THE INVASION PLANS! EVEN THE LANDING SITE!
GET IN. I'LL SHUT DOWN THE MAGNETIC MOORING SO WE CAN CAST OFF AND BE -
SHUNK!


I'M MUCH HARDER TO KILL THAN THAT
YOU KNOW, I PLANNED ON DELIVERING YOU TO BRON ALIVE
I CHANGED MY MIND
SKRAKK
I'M GOING HOME
I'LL GO THROUGH YOU IF I HAVE TO!

ETHAN, HURRY! THE SHIP'S DRIFTING!
CHANG
YOU ARE MORE THAN YOU APPEAR TO BE
NOT THAT IT'S GOING TO SAVE YOU.
SHREEK
IF BRON'S TROOPS COULDN'T STOP ME
YOU WON'T EITHER!
SPWSSH
UFF!
TAKE MY HAND!
HOW CAN HE BE HERE?! IT'S LIKE HE'S
UNSTOPPABLE

KRAKOOSH
SPWOOSH
IT COULDN'T TAKE HIS WEIGHT! I THINK MAYBE HE'S -
I'VE NEVER LOST A BOUNTY!
MY FAMILY NEEDS ME
HRRR!
SMASH!

GAAAHK!
I WON'T FAIL THEM THIS TIME!
GHNNNG!
SPLISH!

SKINK?
DO I
DO I
I'VE
NEVER
WE'RE
GOING
HOME

The CrossGen Universe created by [illegible]

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Brandon Peterson Art Director • Pam Davies Production Manager
Sylvia Bretz Production Assistant • Dave Lanphear Design Director

FIRST
"UNEARTHED"

HERE
I'M TRUSTING YOU

RMMMMM
MM
MM
RMMMBR!

GOOD SO FAR
YOU WERE RIGHT

IT WAS STILL THERE
I THOUGHT IT WAS ONLY A LEGEND
YET *YOU* KNEW WHERE IT WAS
YOU SURPRISE ME, ENSON

KEEP DOING IT
UNDERSTAND, PERSHA, THAT THIS WAS AN INDULGENCE I TRUST MY EYES HAVE SHOWN YOU ALL YOU WISHED TO SEE?
AAAA!
HE KNEW I WAS THERE?
BUT NO ONE'S EVER
NO ONE

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KING DANE

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PRINCESS YLENA

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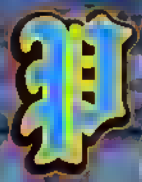

[illegible] Ethan [illegible] West [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] such vast consequences. Graced [illegible] that [illegible] power [illegible] [illegible] Prince Bron [illegible] the [illegible] Dynasty in ritual combat.

[illegible] between East and West, Ethan surrenders himself to the Ravens. However, he is soon freed from his imprisonment by the mysterious Ashleigh, who abducts Ethan from the Raven Keep. Ashleigh [illegible]mpts to [illegible]uit Ethan to the cause of the Underground, a [illegible] to freeing the Lesser Races, the genetically-created beings who are [illegible] at best, slaves at worst.

Ethan declines her offer, instead choosing to make his way back home in order to prevent the all-out war his apparent escape is sure to cause. As they part, Ashleigh gives Ethan a locket, explaining it will help him find her should he have a change of heart.

With only his servant Skink to accompany him, Ethan battles not only Raven patrols, but also a bounty hunter called Exeter. As Ethan prepares to "borrow" a hovership for the journey across the Great Sea, he discovers the landing site for the Raven fleet's invasion of the West.

Now he sails for home and family, hoping to forestall the coming war.

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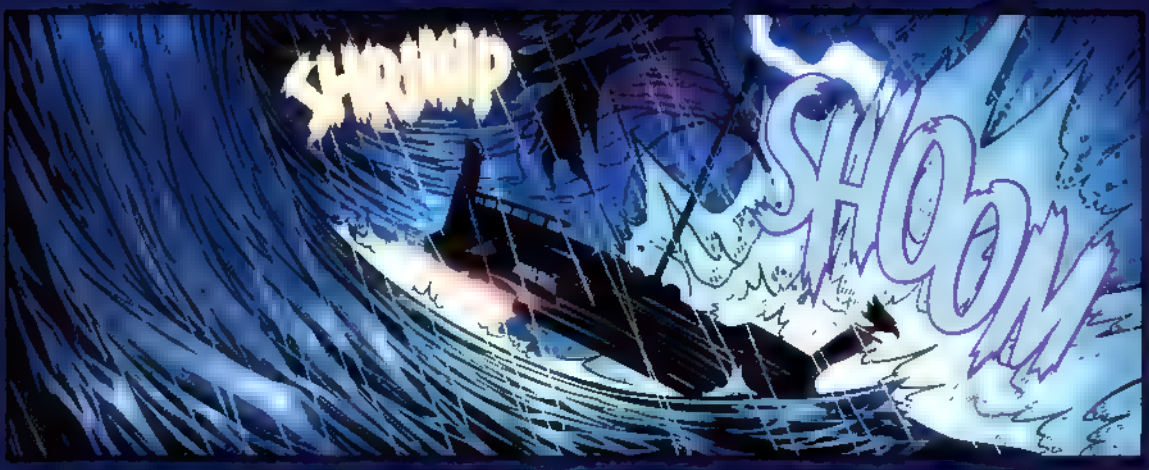
DID
I DO THE
RIGHT
THING?

WE'RE ALMOST HOME AND I STILL CAN'T STOP THINKING ABOUT T'SKINK I CAN'T STOP
WONDERING
ETHAN, I'VE *TOLD* YOU YOU -
I KNOW
I MADE THE DECISION I HAD TO MAKE DOING WHAT I THINK IS RIGHT YOU CALLED IT
AND GOING HOME TO WARN MY FAMILY AND TRY TO STOP THIS WAR *IS* THE RIGHT THING
BUT ASHLEIGH AND THE UNDERGROUND'S CAUSE, *THEY'RE* THE RIGHT THING TOO
AND I STILL SAID NO TO HER
WHEN ALL I NEEDED TO CONCERN MYSELF WITH WAS THE RAVENS AND THE HERONS EVERYTHING WAS SIMPLE. JUST *US* AND *THEM*
NOW THINGS ARE SO
WHIF?!

WHERE DID *THAT* COME FROM?!
GOT HA
IT CAN'T BE THE AUTOPILOT SOMETHING'S DEFINITELY GOING ON UP THERE FOR US TO BE PITCHING AND ROLLING LIKE THIS
A NORTHERN GALE THEY'VE BEEN KNOWN TO BLOW UP THIS SUDDENLY
IT BETTER NOT BE
I'M A LOT MORE COMFORTABLE ON THE BACK OF A HORSE THAN I AM ON THE DECK OF A LOVERSHIP
I WAS PRETTY SURE I COULD GET US HOME ON *CALM* SEAS IF A REAL STORM CLOSES IN

WE COULD BE IN TROUBLE
SKRAKOOM
IT IS A NORTHERNER!
SKINK, WE'LL NEVER OUTRUN THIS!
OUR BEST CHANCE IS TURNING INTO THE WAVES AND TRYING TO RIDE IT OUT!
WE'LL HAVE TO DROP THE SAIL!

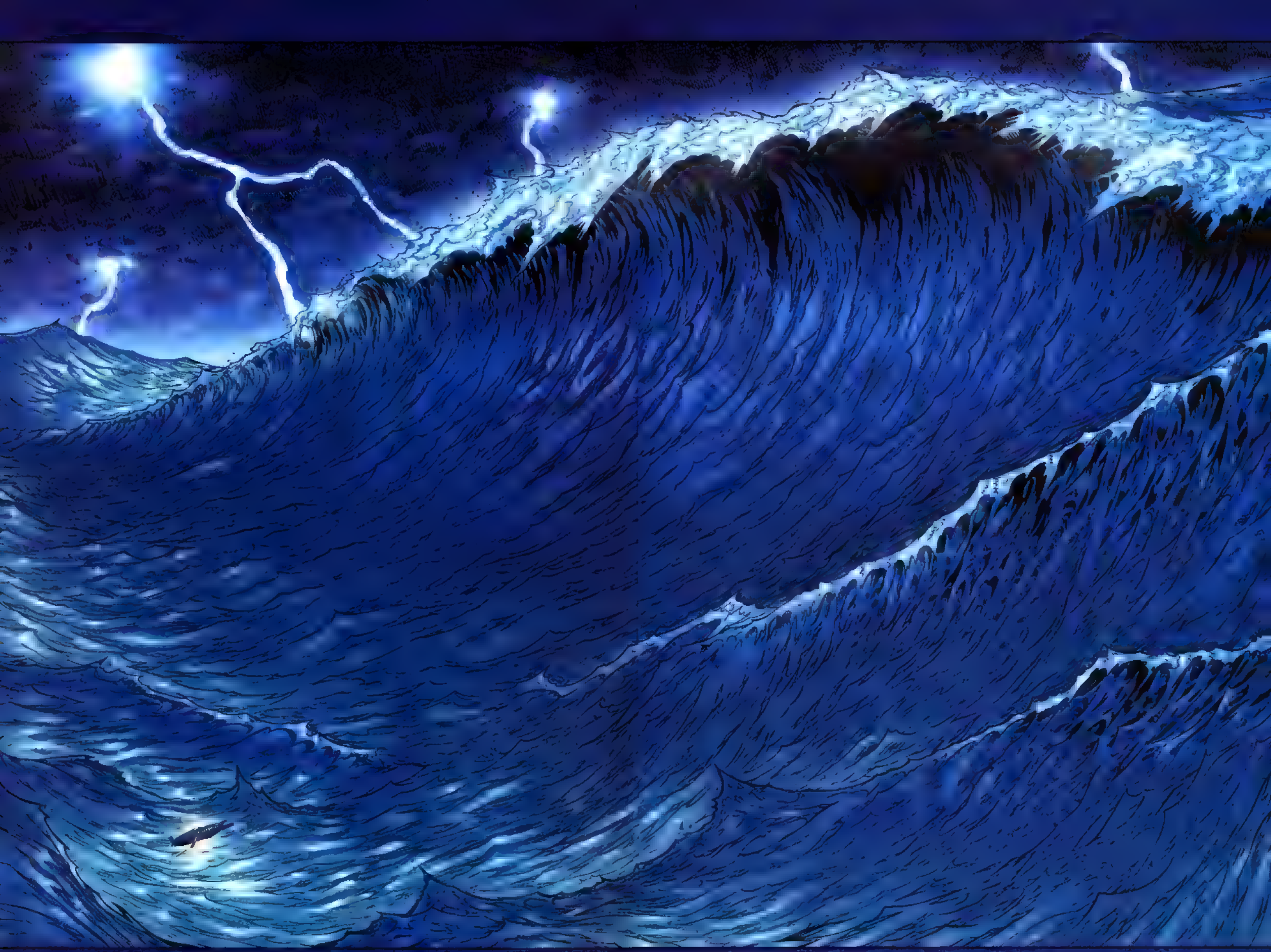
STORMS THIS SUDDEN AREN'T SUPPOSED TO HAPPEN ANYMORE!
THIS MUST BE AS POWERFUL AS THE ONE THAT SWAMPED EDWIN'S FLEET TWO HUNDRED YEARS AGO!
ETHAN, THE SAIL'S TOO FULL! THERE'S NO WAY TO GET IT FURLED!
I CAN KEEP US POINTED INTO THE WAVES!
UGHUB!
SLOSH

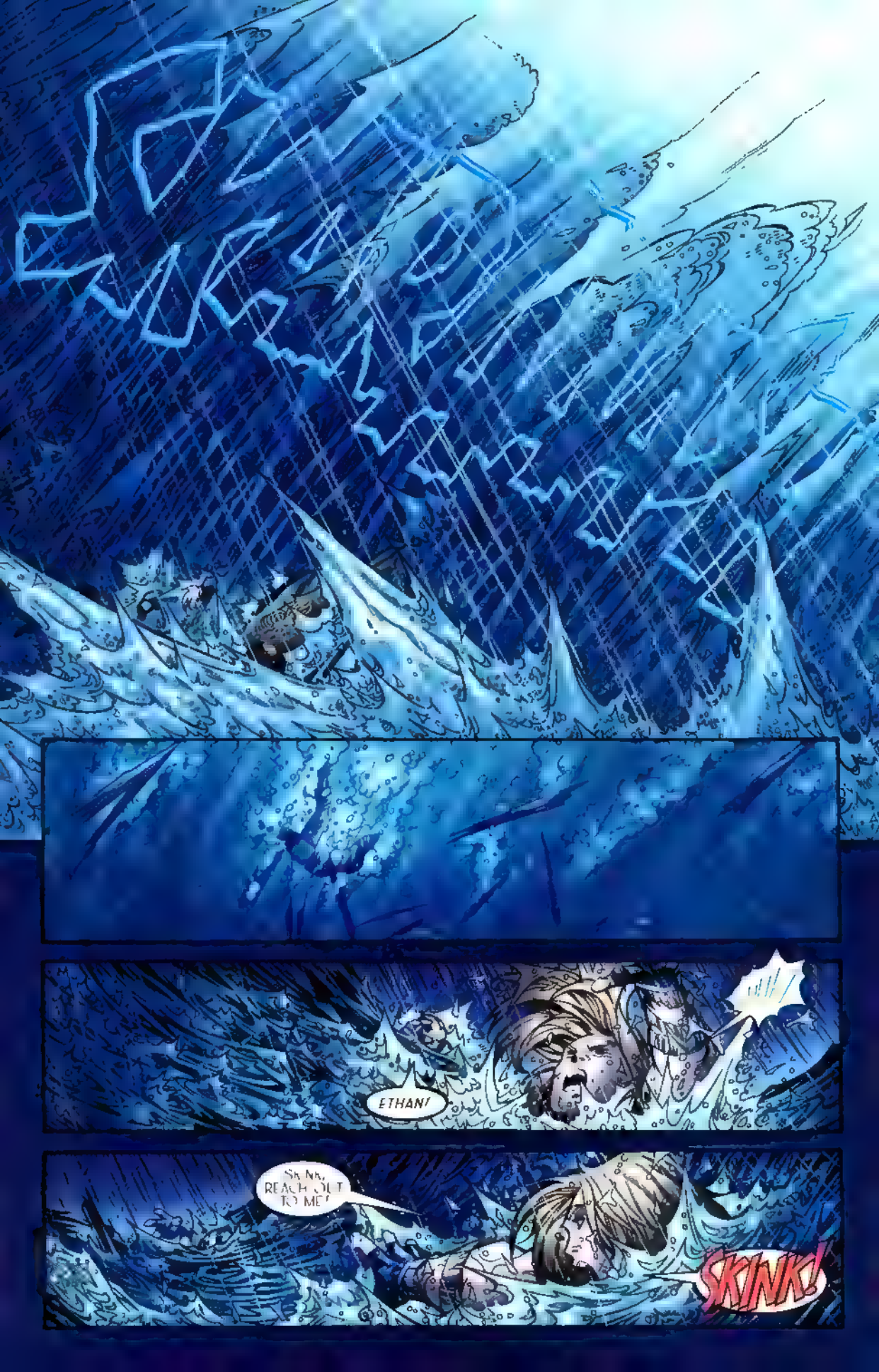

SHOOM

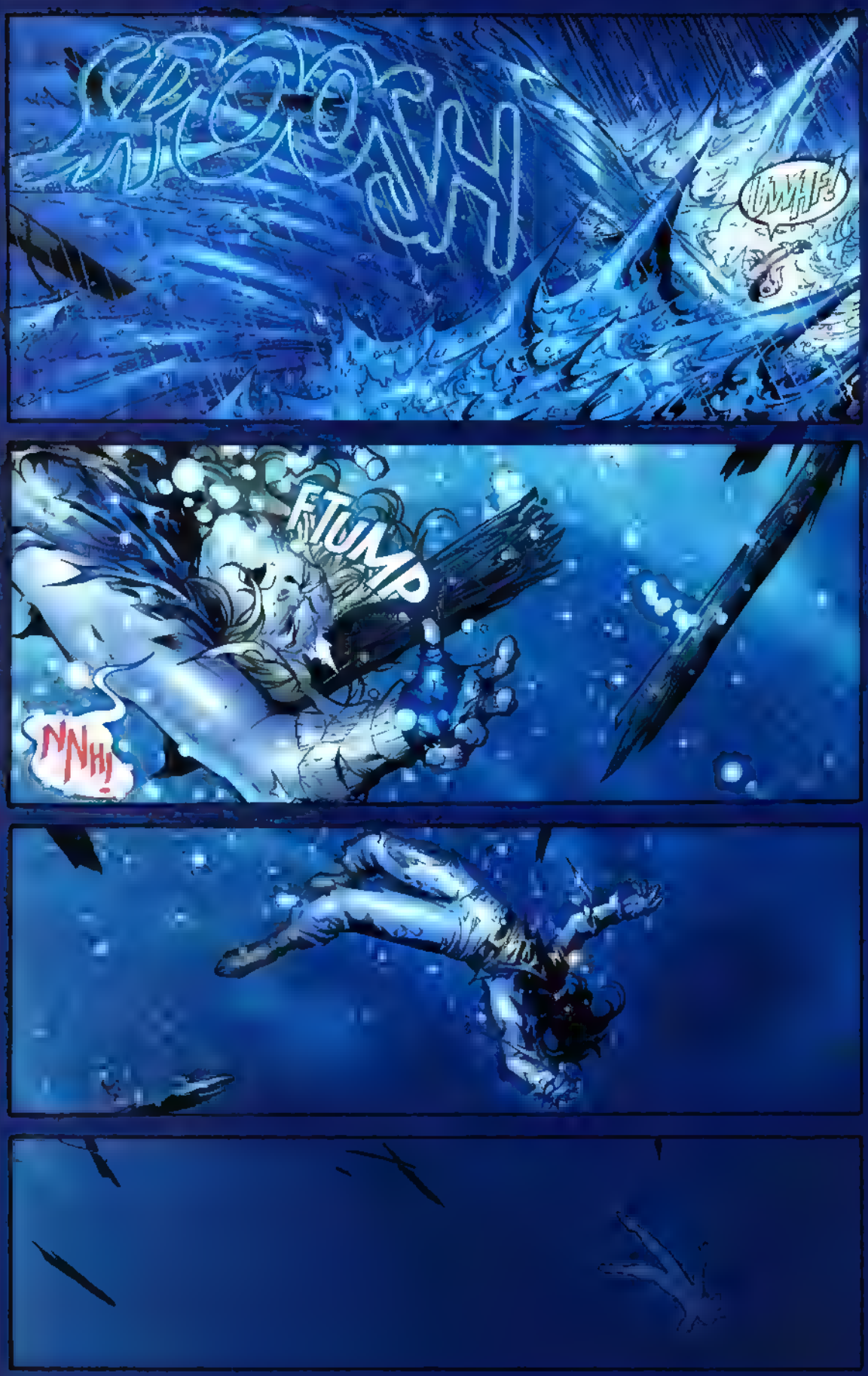
AAH!

IT'S DRAGGING ME AWAY!
SKINK!

HANG ON!
GOT YOU
UNLESS I CAN'T STOP BOTH OF US FROM SLIPPING OFF INTO THE SEA!
SKREEK
WE'RE OKAY IF THE SHIP HOLDS TOGETHER WE'LL BE
BY MY ANCESTORS




ETHAN!
SKINK!


SPOOSH
UWHF!
FTUMP
NNH!

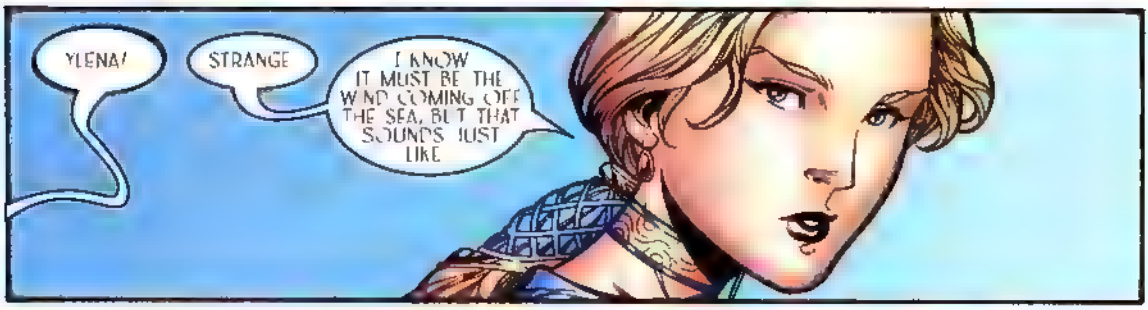
GLLK!
GHH
CAN

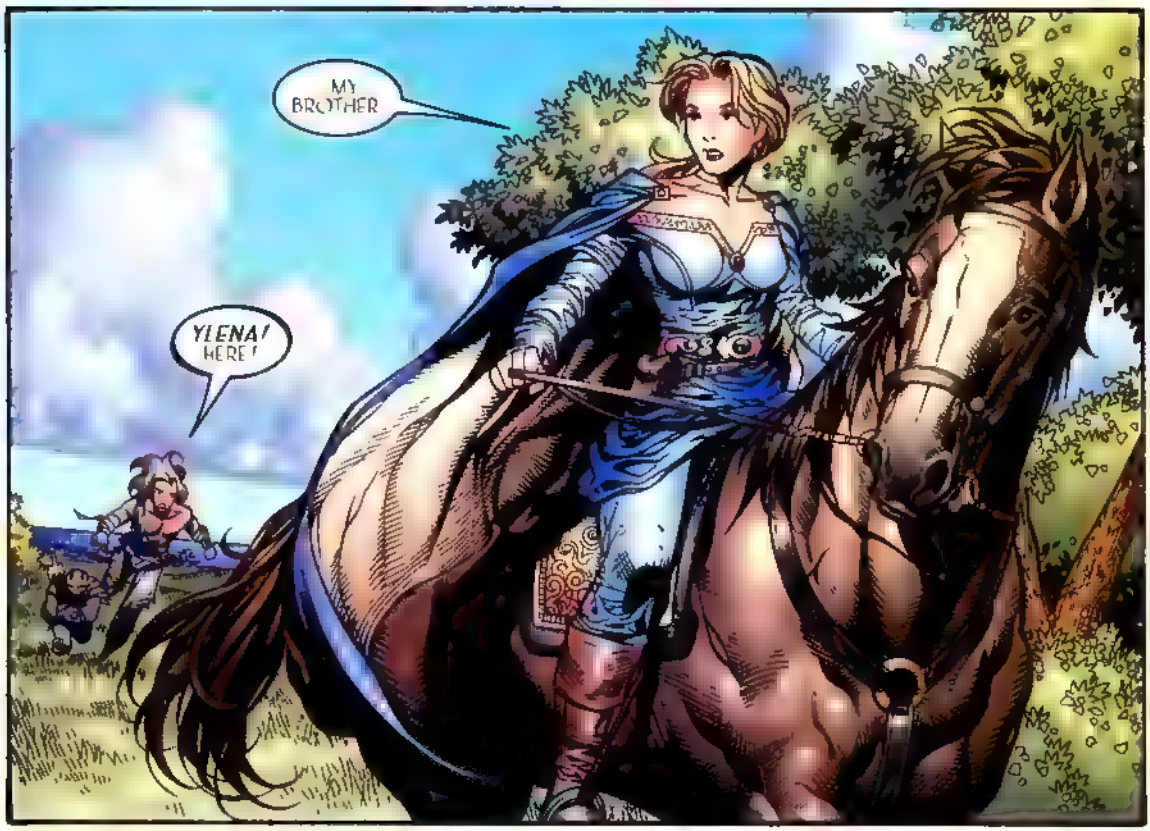
IT'S
IT'S BEAUTIFUL
HAVEN
SAFE? YOU MEAN ME OR WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

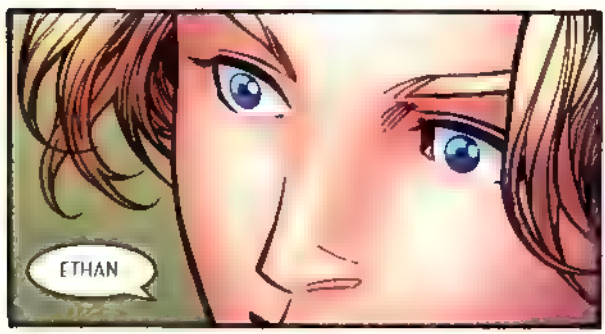
ETHAN?
ETHAN
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
I'M OKAY I THINK
SOMETHING SWAMPED THE SHIP BEING SWAMPED AND THEN SOMETHING THERE WERE PEOPLE UNDERWATER
THEY SAVED ME STUCK ME WITH SOMETHING THAT LET ME BREATHE AND I THINK MAYBE PUT ME TO SLEEP TOO BUT NOT BEFORE I SAW A CITY DOWN THERE
IS THAT POSSIBLE? COULD AN UNDERSEA LESSER RACE HAVE BUILT A SECRET CITY?

I DON'T KNOW ABOUT A CITY, ETHAN, BUT THEY MUST HAVE RESCUED *ME* AS WELL
SPLISH
SPLISH
SPLUSH
I BELIEVE WE OWE OUR LIVES TO THEM
SO
WHERE ARE WE?
LOOK
M
I'M HOME!

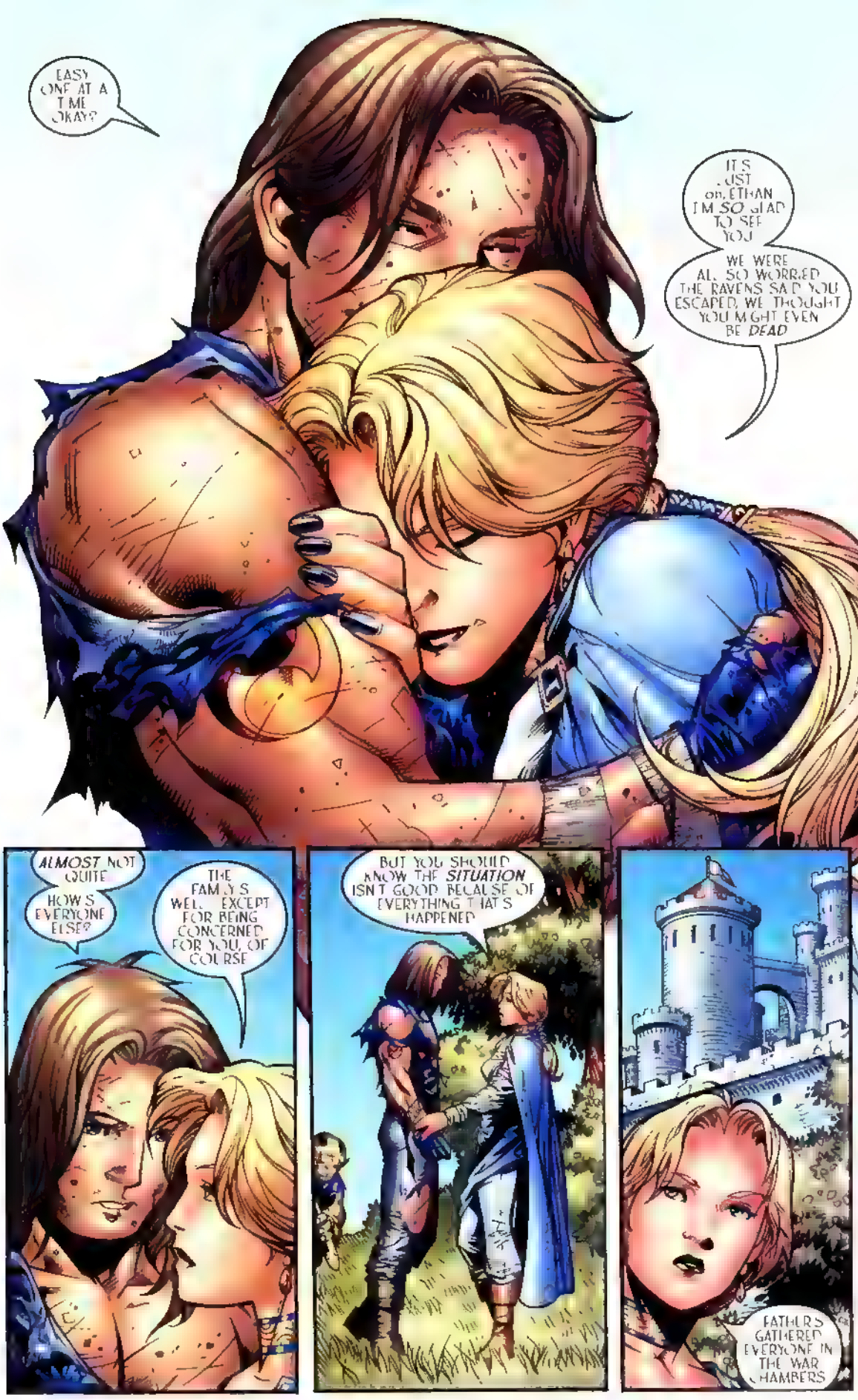
GOOD BOY HOGARTH
FATHER DOESN'T RIDE YOU AS MUCH AS HE -


YLENA!
STRANGE
I KNOW IT MUST BE THE WIND COMING OFF THE SEA, BUT THAT SOUNDS JUST LIKE


MY BROTHER
YLENA! HERE!


ETHAN

ETHAN, WHAT HAPPENED?! WHERE'VE YOU BEEN?!


EASY ONE AT A TIME OKAY?
IT'S JUST OH, ETHAN I'M SO GLAD TO SEE YOU
WE WERE ALL SO WORRIED THE RAVENS SAID YOU ESCAPED, WE THOUGHT YOU MIGHT EVEN BE DEAD
ALMOST NOT QUITE
HOW'S EVERYONE ELSE?
THE FAMILY'S WELL... EXCEPT FOR BEING CONCERNED FOR YOU, OF COURSE
BUT YOU SHOULD KNOW THE SITUATION ISN'T GOOD BECAUSE OF EVERYTHING THAT'S HAPPENED
FATHERS GATHERED EVERYONE IN THE WAR CHAMBERS

MOTHER!
FATHER!
SORRY FOR THE INTERRUPTION
BUT I THOUGHT YOU'D WANT TO SEE WHO WASHED UP ON THE BEACH
THE BEACH? WHAT ARE YOU
TALKING ABOUT?
HAH! WHAT KIND OF BAIT CAUGHT IN A CATCH LIKE THAT, SISTER?
IT CAN'T BE
ETHAN!
THANK THE ANCESTORS YOU'RE ALIVE
SKINK MADE SURE I STAYED THAT WAY, MOTHER
I PROMISED HE WOULD BE SAFE. I KEPT MY WORD
WE'RE INDEBTED TO YOU, SKINK

I WASN'T SURE I'D EVER SEE THIS FACE AGAIN
I'M GLAD TO SEE YOUR SON'S BROTHER HAS THE SAME KNACK FOR GETTING HIMSELF OUT OF HARM'S WAY AS HE DOES FOR GETTING INTO IT
APPARENTLY
GOOD TO HAVE YOU HOME THAN. I WAS GETTING TIRED OF DRINKING MY OWN ALE
I'D BE INTERESTED IN HEARING EXACTLY HOW THIS CAME ABOUT ETHAN
DID YOU ESCAPE?
I WAS SURE YOU WOULD
I JUST DIDN'T KNOW IT WOULD BE THIS SOON. I'M GLAD TO BE BACK WITH MY FATHER
NO
I DIDN'T HAVE ANY INTENTION OF ESCAPING. I WAS TAKEN FROM THE RAVEN KEEP BY A WOMAN WHO CALLED HERSELF ASHLEIGH
SHE WANTED ME TO JOIN A MOVEMENT TO FREE THE LESSER RACES. BUT I TOLD HER MY DUTY WAS TO MY FAMILY
BRON DID FIND ME AND I OFFERED MY SURRENDER. BUT HE REFUSED. IT'S MORE USEFUL TO THE RAVENS TO MAKE IT SEEM I'D BROKEN MY WORD AND FURTHER DISGRACED THEM
BRON INTENDED TO KILL ME THEN AND THERE. BUT I GOT AWAY FROM HIM AND EVENTUALLY STOLE A BOAT. A NORTHERN GALE BLEW UP ON THE VOYAGE
BUT I HAD SOME HELP GETTING HOME
I JUST MADE IT IN TIME TO REFUSE THIS WAR THEY'RE ATTEMPTING TO CREATE

ETHAN WHAT CAN YOU REALLY *DO*? THEY'RE SAYING YOU ESCAPED AND HERE YOU ARE THE *TRUTH* ISN'T GOING TO MATTER
THE RAVENS HAVE BEEN SPOILING FOR A FIGHT FOR DECADES THEY'VE JUST NEVER HAD A CONVENIENT EXCUSE UNTIL NOW
WE'VE BEEN HERE TRYING TO PREPARE IF IT COMES TO THAT
FATHER, YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND THEY'RE ALREADY ON THEIR WAY
WHAT?
AND I KNOW WHERE THEY MEAN TO LAND THEIR INVASION FORCE
THE HOVERSHIP I STOLE WAS THE ADVANCE SCOUTSHIP FOR THE RAVEN FLEET I GOT MY HANDS ON DOCUMENTS NAMING THE LANDING SITE
THEY'RE GOING TO MARSHAL *HERE*
AT POINT KORDAY
YOU'VE DONE WELL MY SON YOU'VE GIVEN US THE ADVANTAGE OF SURPRISE
BUT ISN'T THERE STILL SOME WAY TO AVOID ALL THIS?

THE RAVEN FLEET IS ALREADY LAUNCHED. YES? WILL IT RUN AFOUL OF THE NORTHERNER?
NO, I DON'T THINK SO.
THEN WHAT'S IN MOTION CAN'T BE STOPPED. WE'LL BE READY FOR THEM.
IF IT'S WAR THEY WANT
IT'S WAR THEY'LL HAVE
SHUNG

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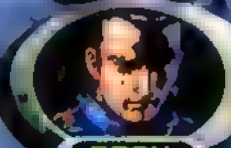
Thus Far in Scion

ETHAN

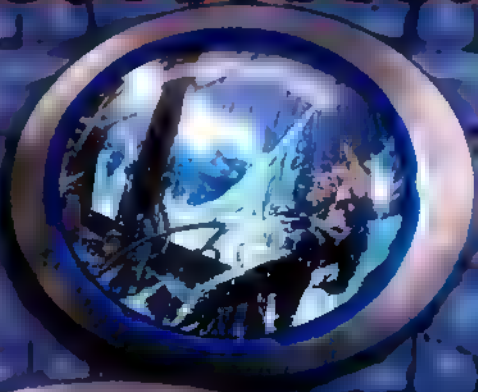

BRON

PRINCESS YLENA

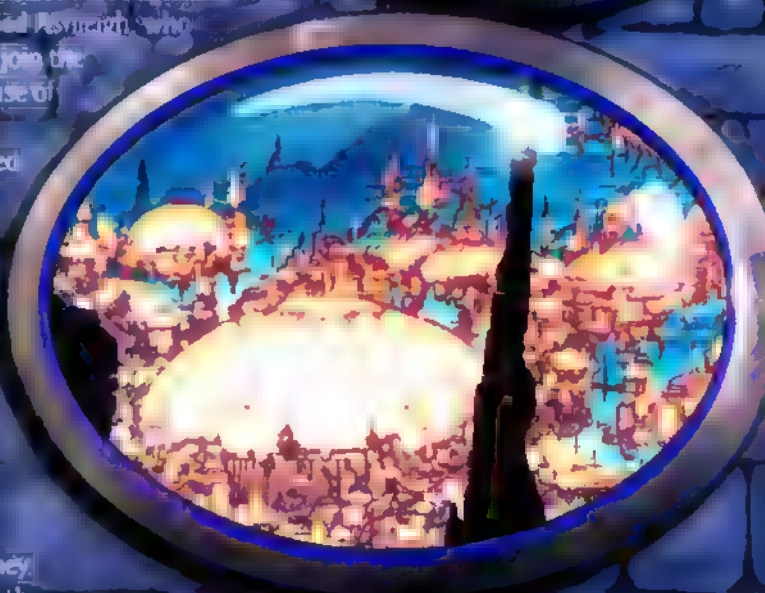
PRINCE ARTOR

PRINCE KAI

[illegible] started with a mysterious sigil has led to war. Prince Ethan of the West-ruling Heron Dynasty was graced [illegible] ritual combat.



Ethan surrendered himself to the Ravens, [illegible] by a woman named Ashleigh, who wanted Ethan to join the Underground cause of freedom for the genetically-created Lesser Races.



Ethan declined her offer, feeling his duty was to journey home and attempt to prevent the war his apparent escape is about to cause.

During that journey Ethan discovered the [illegible] a [illegible] and savage [illegible] of legendary proportions, destroyed Ethan's [illegible] fantastic sea-floor city.

[illegible] to find himself [illegible] Ethan related the East's imminent plans to invade. Now having [illegible]

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SOON NOW

NOT SOON ENOUGH em, TT E BROTHER?

HERE THEY COME

FWANOOOSH
HRAAAAAAAAAAAAH
WHAT'S GOING ON OUT HERE?!
YAAH!
AMONG
GAH!
TO ARMS!

THE SHOCK TROOPS AND DRAGONS SHOULD THROW THE ENTIRE ENCAMPMENT INTO CHAOS

WHEN WE SWEEP IN WE'LL TURN IT INTO A *ROUT*

THAT *BRAND* ON YOUR ARM, ETHAN WILL IT HELP US IN THIS BATTLE?

I'M STILL NOT EXACTLY SURE *WHAT* IT CAN DO

FIND OUT

THIS IS FAR DIFFERENT THAN RITUAL COMBAT IN THE ARENA TOURNAMENT ARMOR'S TOO UNDEPENDABLE, AND *FIRST BLOOD* WON'T WIN THIS DAY

ETHAN KAI YENA

THE TROOPS WILL LOOK TO *US* THE BATTLE OF POINT NORDAY WILL BE A GLORIOUS MARK IN HERON HISTORY IF WE *LEAD BY DEED*

I'M READY

FOR KING AND KINGDOM!

EYAA!
HWF!
RUN!
HFF!
CHANG
NN
YLENA!
GAA!
JOIN THE BATTLE LITTLE BROTHER

WE'VE A LONG DAY AHEAD OF US

ARTOR
WILL
CHANK
GHLK!
SHLUTCH
DON'T WORRY ABOUT PEAR PRINCE ETHAN WHEN I DO
I PROMISE
JOINING YOU

Hm

SOMEHOW NOT AS SATISFYING AS I'D IMAGINED

BASTARD!

YOU SIGNED YOUR *DEATH WARRANT* WITH MY BROTHER'S *BLOOD!*

HIS WON'T BE THE LAST HERON BLOOD I SPILL THIS DAY!

I CUT YOU IN THE ARENA, BRON!

I ONLY REGRET

I DIDN'T *KILL* YOU

ARTOR!

FWOOOSH

AFF!

THE FIELD IS *LOST*, BROTHER OUR TROOPS ARE BREAK NG RANK AND FLEEING FOR THE SHIPS AT ANCHOR

WE NEED TO BE GONE AS WEL

NOT BEFORE I REAP MY REVENGE, KORT!

WE LEAVE NOW OR NOT AT ALL BRON LEAVE *NOW*

AND YOU'LL HAVE YOUR VENGEANCE ANOTHER DAY

AFTER THEM!

AFTER THEM! RUN DOWN EVERY LAST RAVEN DOG BEFORE THEY CAN ESCAPE!

PLEASE!

YOU'LL *NEVER* SEE EASTERN SHORES AGAIN!

NO

NOT THEM

ASHLEIGH?

WHAT ARE YOU

SIRE?

THE RAVENS ARE IN FULL FLIGHT

THE DAY S OURS AND LOSSES WERE MINIMA THANKS TO YOU

HAIL ETHAN!
VICTORY!
THE WARRIOR PRINCE!
PRINCE ETHAN
SIRE?
YLENA
YOU'VE SEEN?
YES
IT'S NOTHING TO BE DONE
ETHAN
IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT

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Thus Far in Scion

What started with a mysterious [illegible] was Prince Ethan of the West, ruling Heron Dynasty was graced with a mark granting him power, leading to the accidental scarring of Prince Bron of the East's Raven Dynasty during ritual combat.

Ethan surrendered himself to the Ravens, but was soon freed from his imprisonment by a woman named Ashleigh, who wanted Ethan to join the Underground cause of freedom for the genetically-created Lesser Races. Ethan declined her offer, feeling his duty was to journey home and attempt to prevent the war his apparent escape was sure to cause.

War, however, was inevitable. The Ravens had already gathered their fleet to launch an attack, and the battle was met on the Western shore, at Point Korday. With the element of surprise on their side, ultimate victory belonged to the Herons, but at terrible price. Ethan's oldest brother and heir to the throne, Artor, was brutally slain by Bron, who then managed to flee Ethan's vengeance. Leading the final charge to drive the Ravens from Western lands, Ethan was startled to be confronted by Ashleigh, who had stowed into the [illegible]

Now Ethan and his fa[illegible] his parents, Queen Mariella, brother Kai and [illegible] left to mourn the [illegible]

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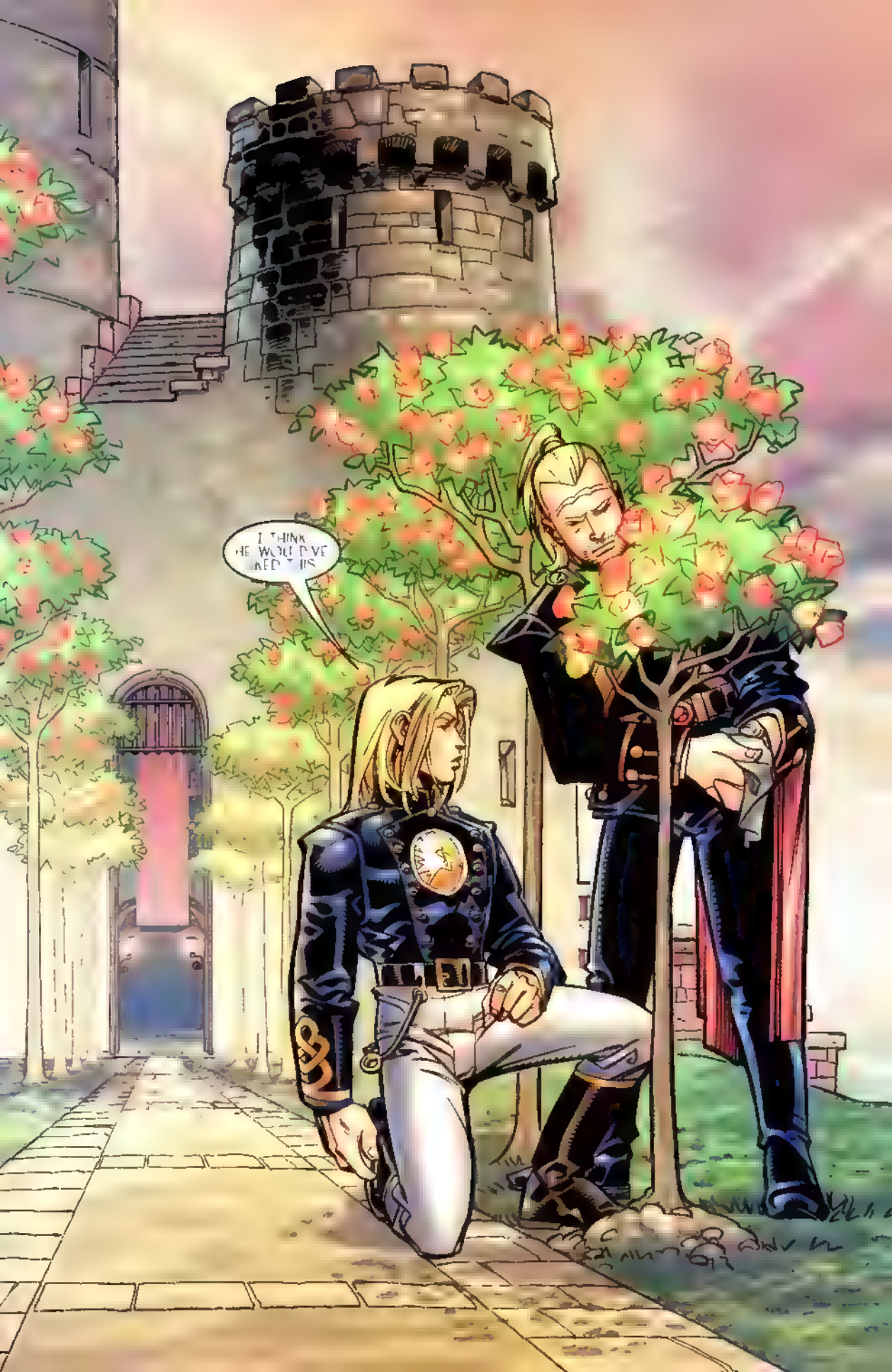
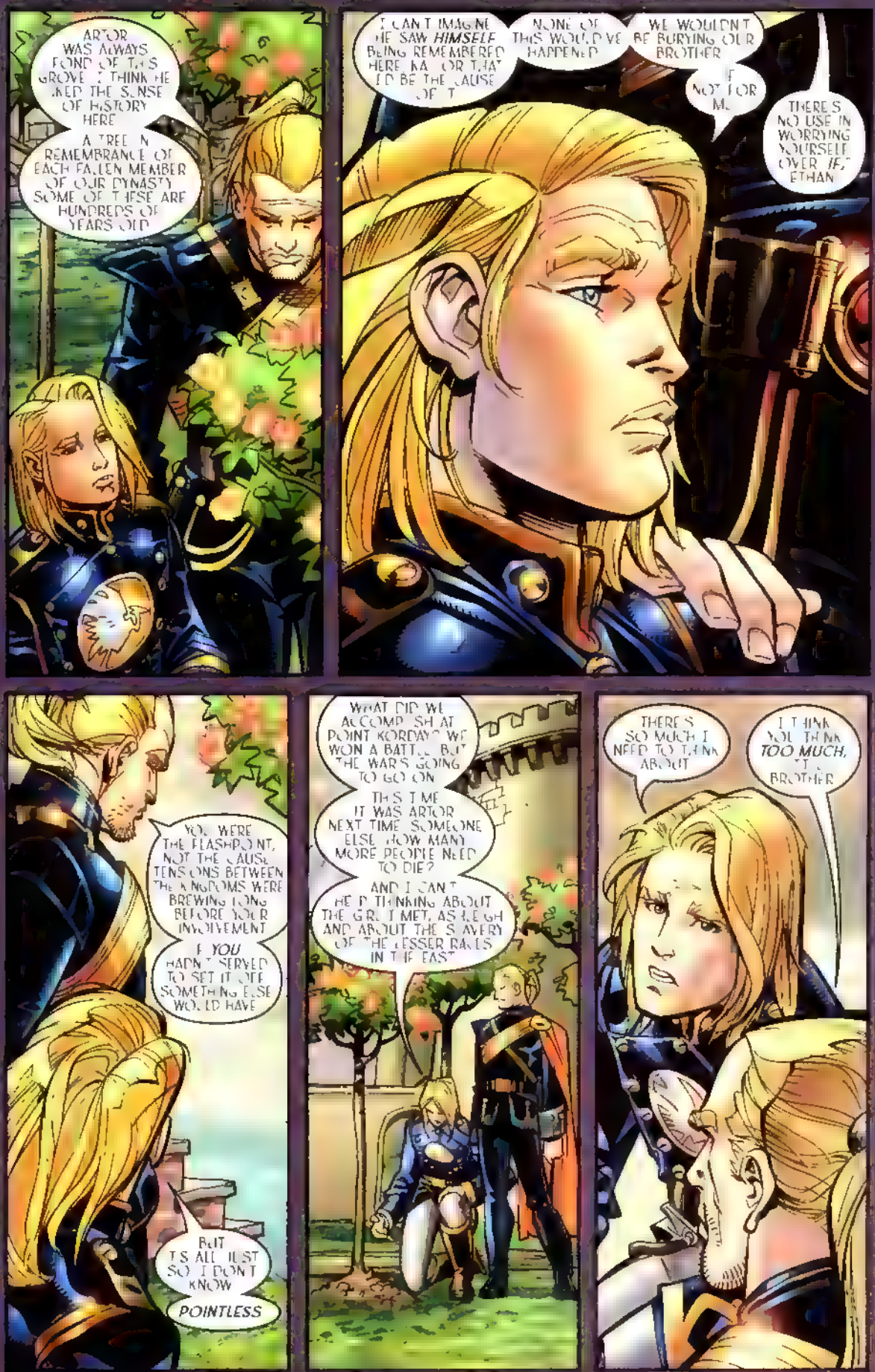
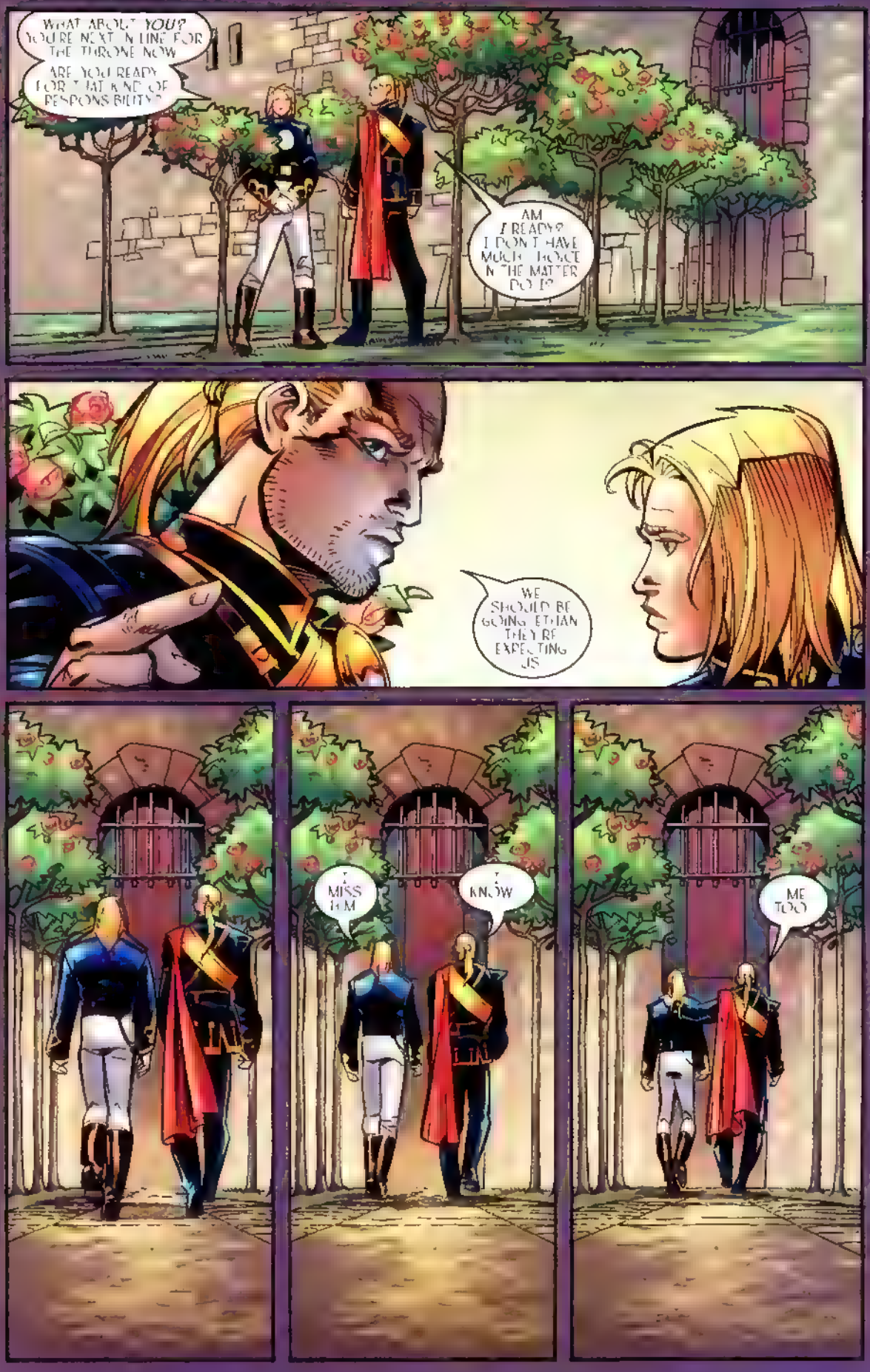
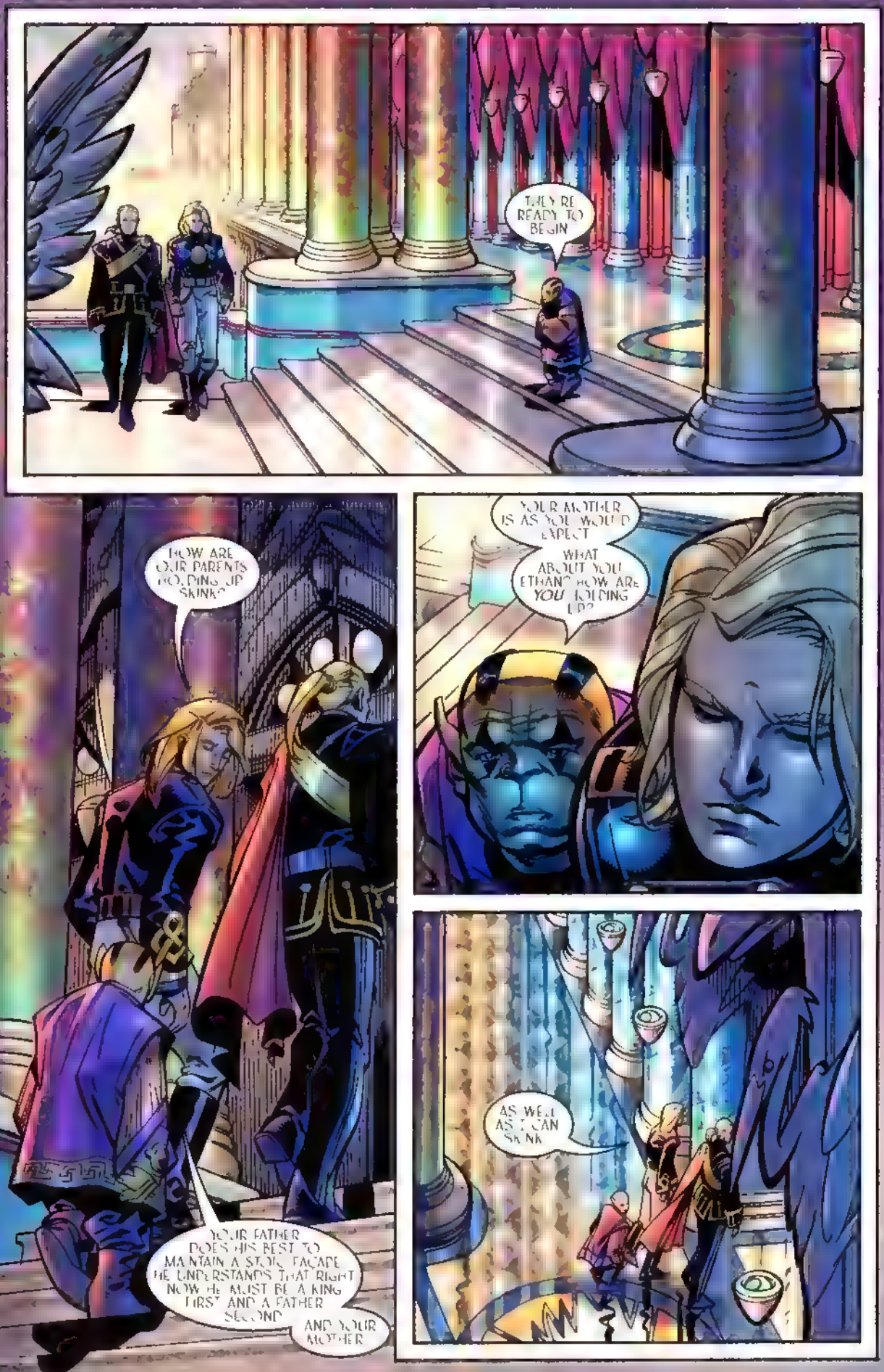

I THINK
HE WOULD'VE
LIKED THIS


ARTOR WAS ALWAYS FOND OF THIS GROVE. I THINK HE LIKED THE SENSE OF HISTORY HERE
A TREE IN REMEMBRANCE OF EACH FALLEN MEMBER OF OUR DYNASTY. SOME OF THESE ARE HUNDREDS OF YEARS OLD
I CAN'T IMAGINE HE SAW HIMSELF BEING REMEMBERED HERE. AS OR THAT I'D BE THE CAUSE OF IT
NONE OF THIS WOULD'VE HAPPENED
WE WOULDN'T BE BURYING OUR BROTHER
IF NOT FOR ME
THERE'S NO USE IN WORRYING YOURSELF OVER IT, ETHAN
YOU WERE THE FLASHPOINT, NOT THE CAUSE. TENSIONS BETWEEN THE KINGDOMS WERE BREWING LONG BEFORE YOUR INVOLVEMENT
IF YOU HADN'T SERVED TO SET IT OFF, SOMETHING ELSE WOULD HAVE
BUT IT'S ALL JUST SO I DON'T KNOW
POINTLESS
WHAT DID WE ACCOMPLISH AT POINT KORDAY? WE WON A BATTLE. BUT THE WAR'S GOING TO GO ON
THIS TIME IT WAS ARTOR. NEXT TIME, SOMEONE ELSE. HOW MANY MORE PEOPLE NEED TO DIE?
AND I CAN'T HELP THINKING ABOUT THE GIRL I MET, ASLEIGH, AND ABOUT THE SLAVERY OF THE LESSER RACES IN THE EAST
THERE'S SO MUCH I NEED TO THINK ABOUT
I THINK YOU THINK TOO MUCH, T'CHALLA BROTHER


WHAT ABOUT YOU? YOU'RE NEXT IN LINE FOR THE THRONE NOW. ARE YOU READY FOR THAT KIND OF RESPONSIBILITY?
AM I READY? I DON'T HAVE MUCH CHOICE IN THE MATTER, DO I?
WE SHOULD BE GOING. ETRIAN THEY'RE EXPECTING US.
I MISS HIM.
I KNOW.
ME TOO.


THEY'RE READY TO BEGIN
HOW ARE OUR PARENTS HOLDING UP SKINK?
YOUR MOTHER IS AS YOU WOULD EXPECT
WHAT ABOUT YOU ETHAN? HOW ARE YOU HOLDING UP?
YOUR FATHER DOES HIS BEST TO MAINTAIN A STOIC FACADE. HE UNDERSTANDS THAT RIGHT NOW HE MUST BE A KING FIRST AND A FATHER SECOND
AND YOUR MOTHER
AS WELL AS I CAN SKINK

CONSIDER NO ONE TO BLAME

FATHER

IT'S DONE

THANK YOU MY SON BOTH OF YOU

I KNOW YOUR BROTHER WOULD APPRECIATE IT

WE'LL GET THROUGH THIS MOTHER

BE STRONG VENA

WE ALL HAVE TO BE STRONG NOW

I THANK YOU ALL FOR COMING HERE. YOUR PRESENCE HONORS MY SON AND COMFORTS MY FAMILY
NEVER HAVE I ADDRESSED YOU WITH A HEAVIER HEART THAN I DO THIS DAY. ANY DEATH IS A TRAGEDY BUT ESPECIALLY SO FOR THOSE YOUNG AND FULL OF PROMISE
TODAY MY SON JOINS HIS ANCESTORS IN THE HERON CATACOMBS BENEATH THIS CATHEDRA
ARTOR WAS MY FIRST BORN. HE WAS TO FOLLOW ME TO THE THRONE AND I BELIEVE HE WOULD HAVE MADE A STRONG RULER
A *JUST* RULER
BUT THAT HAS BEEN TAKEN AWAY FROM YOU
YOU HAVE BEEN DEPRIVED OF A FUTURE KING
AND I LOST A SON
I HELD HIM IN MY ARMS AS A BABE. WATCHED HIM GROW FROM A BOY TO A MAN AND WAS PROUD OF THE MAN HE BECAME
AND NOW ALL THAT HE WAS ALL HE COULD HAVE BEEN IS LOST

I RAISE I AM A LUCKY MAN I AM BLESSED WITH THREE OTHER CHILDREN WHO PROVIDE ME WITH SOLACE
AND YET WHAT CONSOLATION CAN THERE BE FROM THEM AS TEMPERED BY THEIR OWN PAIN FOR THEY HAVE LOST A BELOVED SIBLING
ALL MY CHILDREN FOUGHT VALIANTLY IN THE VICTORY SO BITTERLY WON AT POINT NORDAY BUT RATHER THAN CELEBRATING TRIUMPH MY DAUGHTER GRIEVES
AS DO MY SONS
ONE CAN TAKE NO PLEASURE IN BEING A HERO OF THAT VICTORY
AND THE OTHER MUST NOW BEAR THE BURDEN OF BEING HEIR TO THE THRONE
MOST OFTEN TRAGEDY HAS NO SIRE MOST OFTEN WE'RE LEFT TO QUESTION WHY ONE SO NOBLE LIES IN HIS COFFIN WHY A FAMILY AND A KINGDOM SHOULD SUFFER SO
BUT NOT THIS TIME THIS TIME WE KNOW THE CAUSE OF OUR PAIN
WE KNOW OUR FOE'S ABJECT BRUTALITY
SO CRUEL THAT A LOVING MOTHER STILL WEEPS AT THE SAVAGERY OF HER EX POST CHILD'S DEMISE
OH YES WE KNOW OUR ENEMY OF OLD WE HAVE MET AND DEFEATED HIM IN THIS FIRST CRUSH
BUT THE WAR IS NOT YET WON WE MUST REMAIN STEADFAST FOR THE RAVENS POSSESS MALICE AND GUILE IN EQUAL MEASURE
LET THIS, THEN BE OUR STRENGTH
LET ARTOR'S DEATH BE THE BANNER WE CARRY FORWARD INTO THIS CONFLICT WHEN WE ARE PRESSED LET US DRAW COURAGE FROM THE SACRIFICE ALREADY MADE
TODAY WE BURY OUR DEAD

TOMORROW WE TURN OUR THOUGHTS TO VENGEANCE AND VICTORY!

VENGEANCE, AYE!

VICTORY!

HAIL HERON!

AVENGE ARTOR!

DEATH TO RAVENS!

FAREWELL MY SON

YOU DESERVED BETTER THAN THIS LIFE GAVE YOU

TIME TO SAY YOUR GOODBYES

MY BEAUTIFUL BOY I LOVE YOU WITH ALL MY HEART

REST WELL BROTHER

I'LL MISS YOU

GOODBYE

I'M SORRY ARTOR

LET HIM BE BORNE HENCE AS BEFITS A HERO

VMMMMMMMMMMMMMMMK

WHAT TOOK PLACE IN THE CATHEDRAL WAS FOR THE MASSES
THIS IS FOR US
YOU WILL BE AVENGED MY SON
KLIK-T

I'M THE ONE TO EXACT VENGEANCE FATHER
I'LL GO END BRON AND REPAY HIM IN KIND BLOOD FOR BLOOD
ETHAN WE ALL RESPECT YOUR DESIRE TO PUNISH YOUR BROTHER'S KILLER THE SAME FIRE BURNS IN MY BELLY
BUT I CAN'T ALLOW IT YOU LEFT OUR LANDS ONCE AND WE'RE LUCKY YOU RETURNED TO US ALIVE
I WON'T LET YOU LEAVE HOME AGAIN
BUT I'M AT THE HEART OF EVERYTHING
ARTOR NEVER WOULD HAVE DIED IF I HADN'T SET ALL THIS INTO MOTION
IT'S MY RESPONSIBILITY TO AVENGE IT
I'M THE OLDEST NOW ETHAN THAT DUTY SHOULD FALL TO ME
YOU CAN'T DO THIS BECAUSE YOU'RE THE OLDEST ALIVE
YOU'RE NEXT IN LINE OF SUCCESSION
ETHAN LISTEN TO ME I BROUGHT ARTOR INTO THIS WORLD THE BABY I SUCKLED AT MY BREAST BLED HIS LIFE OUT ONTO THE MUD
I KNOW YOUR HEART IS SCARRED BUT THERE IS NO GREATER HEARTACHE THAN THAT OF A PARENT BURYING A CHILD
I WANT ARTOR AVENGED AS MUCH AS ANY OF YOU DO BUT NOT AT THE EXPENSE OF EITHER OF MY REMAINING SONS, OR MY DAUGHTER
IN ALL TRUTH, ETHAN

YOU ARE FAR TOO VALUABLE TO RISK ON SOME VENDETTA
WHO?!
WHO ARE YOU?! HOW DID YOU GET IN HERE?!
ANSWER ME OR MY BROTHER ISN'T THE ONLY ONE WHO'LL BE LAID TO REST THIS DAY
MY APOLOGIES
I HAD NO WISH TO INTRUDE ON YOUR PRIVACY AT SUCH A PAINFUL TIME, BUT IT'S QUITE IMPORTANT I SPEAK WITH YOUR FAMILY
RELEASE HIM, KAL
AT LEAST GIVE HIM THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPLAIN HIMSELF

THOUGH I WARN YOU I HAD BEST FIND THE EXPLANATION A SATISFACTORY ONE
OF COURSE AGAIN
MY APOLOGIES
MY NAME IS BERND RECHTS
DO I KNOW YOU SIRE?
I DON'T THINK SO
I THINK PERHAPS I DO
YOU MUST BE MISTAKEN I'M A STRANGER HERE
I'VE COME FROM AFAR
TO OFFER YOU MY AID
I'VE NO LOVE LOST FOR THE OPPONENT IN THIS STRUGGLE SO I MAKE MYSELF AVAILABLE TO YOU AS A COUNSELOR OF WAR
YOU WISH TO HELP US AGAINST THE RAVENS
AGAINST THE RAVENS YES
WHY DO WE NEED YOU?
BECAUSE YOU'VE NOT MADE WAR IN YOUR LETTIMES BECAUSE YOU WON THE VICTORY ONLY WITH SURPRISE AS YOUR ALLY
AND BECAUSE THE GET OF BEARS COULD BE A PIVOTAL ADVANTAGE IF PROPERLY HARNESSED

AS I SAID, ETHAN YOU'RE FAR TOO VALUABLE. YOUR PLACE MUST BE HERE
YOU MEAN BECAUSE OF THIS... THIS THING STARTED THE CHAIN OF EVENTS THAT LED US TO THIS TOMB
I'M BEGINNING TO THINK IT'S MORE A CURSE THAN A GIFT AND FRANKLY I'M NO CLOSER TO UNDERSTANDING WHAT IT TRULY IS OR WHAT IT CAN DO
THE SIGIL COULD BE A VERY POTENT WEAPON IN THIS WAR
IT COULD MEAN VICTORY TO ONE SIDE OR THE OTHER
FORGIVE ME SIR BUT I DON'T FIND THESE MATTERS TO BE ANY OF YOUR CONCERN
OH I THINK YOU'LL FIND THAT THEY ARE

RRRRGH!

ETHAN! WHAT DID YOU
I DID
NOTHING I DIDN'T DO ANYTHING HE JUST TOUCHED ME AND
THAT HAPPENED
BUT I FEEL FINE ACTUALLY THAT'S NOT TRUE I FEEL
BETTER, FOR SOME REASON
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
A BIT WEAK BUT I'LL
UNDERSTAND I MEAN YOU AND YOUR FAMILY NO HARM
I HAVE OTHER THINGS TO DO SORRY
ANOTHER TIME THEN

THIS CHANGES NOTHING I STILL INTEND TO HAVE BRON SLAIN FOR ARTOR'S DEATH
ETHAN
YOUR MOTHER AND I HAVE BURIED ONE SON WE'RE NOT ANXIOUS TO BURY ANOTHER
YOU DID BURY A SON I BURIED A BROTHER
AND IT CAN'T GO UNPUNISHED
THAT'S WHAT YOU SAID ISN'T IT? THAT'S WHAT YOU TOLD THE PEOPLE FATHER TODAY WE MOURN, TOMORROW WE TURN OUR THOUGHTS TO VENGEANCE
YOU WANT THE PEOPLE TO RALLY TO THE CAUSE I'M NOT ONLY YOUR SON I'M A SOLDIER OF THIS REALM
WHY STOP *ME* FROM DOING EXACTLY WHAT YOU'VE ASKED?
YOU PUT ME IN THE POSITION OF CHOOSING BETWEEN BEING A MONARCH AND BEING A FATHER
WHAT I TELL THE PEOPLE I TELL THEM FOR THE GOOD OF OUR KINGDOM WE'VE NOT KNOWN WAR FOR GENERATIONS ETHAN THE PEOPLE ARE UNPREPARED FOR THE COST THAT ACCOMPANIES IT
AS DISTASTEFUL AS IT MIGHT BE, I'VE USED ARTOR'S DEATH TO MUSTER THEIR SUPPORT SLAYING BRON WOULD SERVE TO INTENSIFY T

BUT WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE *OTHER* OUTCOME? WHAT IF ANOTHER OF MY SONS PERISHES AT RAVEN HANDS?
THESE ARE NOT DECISIONS TO BE MADE CAVALIERLY WHAT PASSION DEMANDS DELIBERATION COUNTERMANDS
THERE ARE A MULTITUDE OF REASONS I SHOULD FORBID IT
AND JUST AS MANY TO ALLOW IT
I REALIZE I'M SPEAKING TO THE SAME SON WHO BROUGHT MY STALLION HOME THROUGH A BLIZZARD WHEN IT WAS NO MORE THAN A BOY YOU HAVE A *HABIT* OF DOING WHAT MUST BE DONE AND COMING BACK SAFE
I'VE CAUSED ENOUGH HARM LET ME DO SOMETHING *RIGHT*
MARIE, AS?
I CAN'T BRING MYSELF TO *TELL* ONE OF MY CHILDREN TO PLACE HIMSELF IN HARM'S WAY BUT YOU'RE NO LONGER A CHILD, ETHAN
IF YOU BELIEVE THIS IS WHAT YOU MUST DO I TRUST YOU
THEN I LEAVE FOR RAVEN LANDS IN THE MORNING I SWEAR THIS UPON YOUR GRAVE BROTHER
YOU *WILL* BE AVENGED

HERE
I MAGINE YOU'LL NEED THIS
I IMAGINE
SINCE I'M GOING TO KILL A MAN WITH IT
I'M SURE YOU DON'T NEED TO HEAR THIS, BUT I NEED TO SAY IT. WHEN YOU FIND BRON, DON'T TAKE HIM LIGHTLY. DESPITE WHATEVER POWER THAT THING ON YOUR ARM GIVES YOU.
HATE MAKES YOU RECKLESS.
I'LL REMEMBER.
KATIE, THE FAMILY REALLY NEEDS ME. YOU KNOW I'LL COME BACK.
OF COURSE I KNOW THAT.
TAKE CARE OF EVERYONE WHILE I'M GONE.
I'LL TELL YOU TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF WHILE YOU'RE GONE, LITTLE BROTHER.
LOOK AFTER HIM, SKINK.
I ALWAYS HAVE.

WE'VE NO TIME TO DALLY. ETHAN MUCH AWAITS US IN THE EAST.
YOU GO AHEAD I... I'LL CATCH UP.

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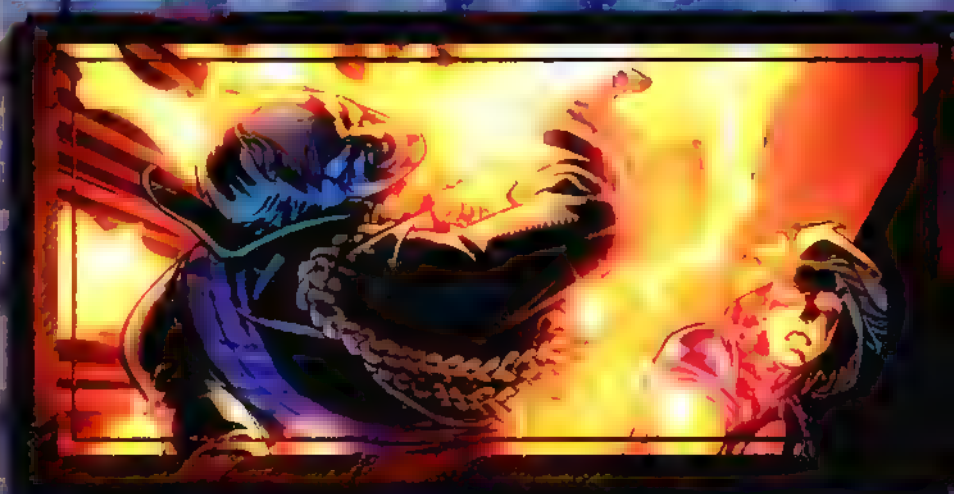
Thus Far in Scion

[illegible] a mysterious sigil led to [illegible] Prince Ethan of the [illegible] Raven Dynasty during ritual combat.

[illegible] Ethan [illegible] Ashleigh [illegible] Ethan to join the Underground's [illegible] freedom for the genetically-created Lesser Races. Ethan declined her offer, feeling his [illegible] the clouds of war gathered on the horizon.

[illegible] Ravens had already launched their invasion fleet, and the battle was met on the Western shore, at Point Korday. With the element of surprise on their side, ultimate victory belonged to the Herons, but at a terrible price. Ethan's [illegible] brother and heir to the throne, Artor, was brutally [illegible] who [illegible] managed to escape Ethan's vengeance.

[illegible] was [illegible] royal [illegible] Dane using the opportunity to whip the people [illegible] anti-[illegible] frenzy. Afterward, Ethan calling [illegible] Bernd Rechts appeared in the Heron crypt, claiming to be a visitor from [illegible] [illegible] great interest [illegible] sigil, but was blown [illegible] when [illegible] made [illegible] Ignoring Bernd's suggestions to the contrary, Ethan convinced his parents to [illegible] for [illegible] pursue [illegible] vendetta against [illegible]



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SO
SEE ANYTHING YOU LIKE?

YOUR ROUND

RIGHT RIGHT, I'M GOING

SORRY, HAVEN'T SEEN HIM

WATCH WHERE YOU WALK, DAT

BEG PARDON SIRE

BAD BUSINESS AT POINT KORDAY. HOW LONG DO YOU THINK THIS WAR'LL GO ON?

TAKING LONG ENOUGH WITH THOSE DRINKS

I'M NOT SURE ANY SPECIALS THAT *AREN'T* ON THE MENU?

WELL I CAN'T THINK OF A REASON TO VENTURE OUT ON A NIGHT LIKE THIS

LONG ENOUGH TO CLIP THE HERON'S WINGS HEY?

SO I'D SAY WE'VE GOT ALL NIGHT TO EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITIES

I SHOULD TELL YOU, I'VE WORKED UP QUITE AN APPETITE

I'M SURE WE CAN FIND A WAY TO SATISFY YOU

SIRS? I APOLOGIZE FOR THE WAIT BUT

FWUMP!

UMF?!

Ahm

PRINCE BRON
I'M HERE
BECAUSE I INTEND TO FIND *THIS* CREATURE
HE IS AN ESCAPED SLAVE FROM RAVEN KEEP MY PERSONAL SERVANT
HE'S ALSO SUSPECTED OF HAVING TIES TO THE UNDERGROUND MOVEMENT IT'S LIKELY HE'S HEADED FOR THE UNDERGROUND'S HIDDEN SANCTUARY
IF ANY OF YOU HAVE SEEN HIM, OR HAVE INFORMATION AS TO HIS WHEREABOUTS
IT WOULD BE WISE TO TELL ME *NOW*
NO ONE?

YOU
PLEASE, MASTER I DON'T
I WANT TO KNOW WHAT YOU KNOW
GAAH!
NUH NOTHING MASTER PLEASE
aaguh
MERCY
EEYAGH!
ANSWER ME
STOP IT!
KRAK

YOU KNOW SOMETHING?
I
WE
I
DO YOU KNOW SOMETHING?
AAAH!!
I WON'T ASK A THIRD TIME
I SAW HIM THIS MORNING PASSING THROUGH
ON FOOT?
YES, ON FOOT, HEADED NORTH I DIDN'T HELP HIM AT ALL
PLEASE THAT'S EVERYTHING I KNOW
THAT HAD BETTER BE THE TRUTH
IT IS I SWEAR IT IS
IF I FIND OUT I WAS LIED TO OR THAT EVEN ONE OF YOU HELD BACK INFORMATION
I'LL COME BACK HERE AND BURN THIS DUNGHEAP TO THE GROUND
AND BE CERTAIN EVERY LAST ONE OF YOU WILL BE INSIDE WHEN I DO

ANYTHING?
NORTH
FATHER'S NOT GOING TO BE PLEASED WHEN HE FINDS WE'VE BOTH LEFT THE KEEP FOR SOMETHING LIKE THIS AT A TIME OF WAR
WELL IT'S NOT FATHER'S SLAVE WHO ESCAPED IS IT, KORT?
AN AGENT OF THE UNDERGROUND RIGHT IN MY OWN CHAMBERS WHO KNOWS WHAT SECRETS HE'S CARRYING BACK TO THEM
I WON'T BE SEEN AS A FOOL WHO COULDN'T EVEN COMMAND THE OBEDIENCE OF HIS OWN SLAVE
WE DON'T GO HOME UNTIL HE'S SPITTED ON MY BLADE, LITTLE BROTHER AND IF HE LEADS US TO THE UNDERGROUND'S NEST, AVE
KRAKOOM
SO MUCH THE BETTER

HFF
HFF
HFF
SPASH
SPASH
AAGH!

PRINCE KORT
PLEASE YOU WERE ALWAYS KIND TO ME. MY WIFE AND CHILD WAIT FOR ME, AND I ONLY WANT TO BE REUNITED WITH THEM
PLEASE SPARE ME
HE'S NOT GOING TO KILL YOU
...I AM

PLEASE MASTER BROK MERCY
SNUF
WHY IS IT
YOU LESSER RACES ARE ALWAYS BEGGING FOR MERCY?
I'LL GRANT YOU THE MERCY OF A QUICK DEATH IF YOU TELL ME WHAT YOU KNOW OF THE UNDERGROUND WHERE'S THEIR SANCTUARY
MASTER I... TELL YOU
NOTHING!
COME ABOUT YOU DUMB-WITTED BEAST! COME ABOUT!
AT LEAST STAY OUT OF THE WAY, FOOL!
HE'S MINE!

UFF!
KRAKOOM

RRRRUNCH
GAAGH!
HOW DARE YOU

HOW DARE YOU DO THIS TO ME
I CLOTHED YOU, I FED YOU, I PUT A ROOF OVER YOUR HEAD!
AND DID YOU SHOW ME THE SLIGHTEST GRATITUDE?
RRRAH!
NO
YOU REPAID ME BY GIVING OUR SECRETS TO THE UNDERGROUND BY FLEEING TO THEM
YOU WON'T SUCCEED, YOU KNOW
THIS REBELLION, WHATEVER IT IS YOU'RE PLANNING
AS SOON AS WE'VE DEALT WITH THE HERONS, WE'LL TURN OUR ATTENTION TO THE UNDERGROUND
WE'LL FIND YOU AND SNUFF YOU OUT, LIKE THE VERMIN YOU ARE
DAMN YOU, TYRANT BRON!
DAMN YOU AND YOUR WHOLE DYNASTY!
YOU WON'T KEEP US AS SLAVES FOREVER!
WE'LL RISE UP! WE'LL—
SHUK

FILTH
SHUK
EASY, WASN'T IT?
BUT THEN YOU NEVER FOUND *MURDER* TERRIBLY DIFFICULT ANYWAY

I CAN'T HELP BUT WONDER WHY A RAVEN PRINCE IS OFF PURSUING AN ESCAPED SLAVE

SHOULDN'T YOU BE HELPING WITH THE WAR EFFORT?

I COULD ASK THE SAME OF YOU

AND I'D TELL YOU I DON'T BELIEVE IN IT THERE ARE OTHER CAUSES

MORE **IMPORTANT** CAUSES

I MUST CONFESS TO YOU, ASHLEIGH, I'VE HAD MY SUSPICIONS OF AN UNDERGROUND AGENT IN THE KEEP FOR SOME TIME

BUT UNTIL NOW I WASN'T PREPARED TO BELIEVE IT WAS MY OWN **SISTER**

NOK SERVED YOU FAITHFULLY FOR YEARS AND MOST OF THE TIME YOU COULDN'T EVEN BE BOTHERED TO CALL HIM BY NAME
YOUR CRUELTIES DROVE HIM TO THE UNDERGROUND HE'S THE ONE WHO SOUGHT ME OUT
AND HE FINALLY FLED BECAUSE HIS FAMILY WAS WAITING FOR HIM IN OUR SANCTUARY YOU PROBABLY DIDN'T KNOW HE HAD A FAMILY
I DIDN'T CARE
I REGRET I ARRIVED TOO LATE TO STOP YOU THIS TIME, BROTHER
UNDERSTAND I WON'T MAKE THAT MISTAKE AGAIN
I ALLOW YOU THIS ONE TRANSGRESSION BECAUSE WE SHARE THE SAME BLOOD
BUT IF YOU COME HERE AGAIN YOU WON'T LEAVE ALIVE
I BELIEVE THAT SOUNDS LIKE A THREAT, ASHLEIGH
NOT A THREAT A PROMISE YOU NEED PROOF?
WHAT ARE YOU
WHAT?

MY MOUNT! WHO DID THIS?! HOW?!
FIRST AND LAST WARNING, BRON
DON'T COME HERE AGAIN
OR WE'LL KILL YOU
WHAT GOES ON HERE SISTER?
SNAP
ANSWER ME, ASHLEIGH
ASHLEIGH?

WE'RE AT WAR FOR THE FIRST TIME IN TWO CENTURIES WE GET ROUTED AND DRIVEN FROM THE ENEMY'S SHORES
AND YOU TWO CAN'T FIND ANYTHING BETTER TO DO THAN RIDE OFF AFTER AN ESCAPED SLAVE?
I EXPECT SOMETHING LIKE THIS FROM YOU BRON, BUT I THOUGHT YOU KNEW BETTER MORT'S TIME YOU STOPPED BEING SWEPT UP BY YOUR BROTHER'S FITS OF TEMPER
BY OUR ANCESTORS, BRON YOU'RE NEXT IN LINE FOR THE THRONE THIS BEHAVIOR ONLY EXACERBATES MY CONCERNS OVER YOUR READINESS TO SUCCEED ME ONE DAY
NOW THAT YOUR LITTLE ADVENTURE'S CONCLUDED, DID ANYTHING USEFUL COME OF IT?
NO, FATHER
NOTHING
NO, OF COURSE NOT
I WANT YOU BOTH TO MEET SOMEONE WHO ARRIVED WHILE YOU WERE GONE ON YOUR FOOL'S ERRAND SOMEONE WHO'S GOING TO BE QUITE USEFUL TO US

THIS IS MAI SHEN
SHE COMES TO US FROM LANDS TO THE FAR EAST OFFERING HER SERVICES AS WAR ADVISOR TO OUR CAUSE
MA THESE ARE MY SONS BRON AND KORT MY DAUGHTER IS
I HAVE NO IDEA WHERE MY DAUGHTER IS AS USUAL
KORT
AND BRON NASTY SOUVENIR YOU HAVE THERE
DON'T
I KNOW WHO GAVE YOU THAT SCAR AND I CAN HELP YOU GET YOUR REVENGE
IF YOU'LL LET ME
OH YES BRON I EXPECT YOU AND I ARE GOING TO BE GREAT FRIENDS

SHUT DOWN, THE SHORE'S JUST AHEAD
I HAVE TO BE HONEST, ETHAN, I CAN'T SAY I'M OVERJOYED AT BEING BACK IN EASTERN LANDS
I DON'T THINK I'VE EVER SEEN YOU OVERJOYED SKINA
BUT I'VE SWORN TO REPAY BRON IN KIND FOR ARTOR'S MURDER, AND I DON'T THINK HE'S ABOUT TO COME TO US
WE AT LEAST NEED SOMEPLACE TO START LOOKING
WHEN ASHLEIGH GAVE THIS TO ME, SHE SAID IT WOULD LEAD ME TO HER
LET'S FIND OUT

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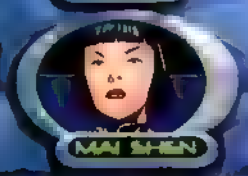
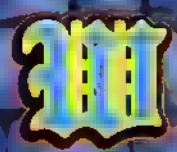
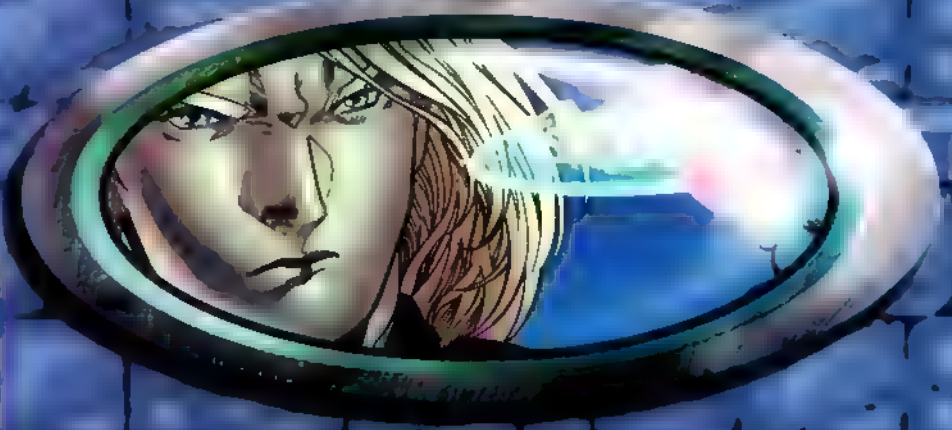


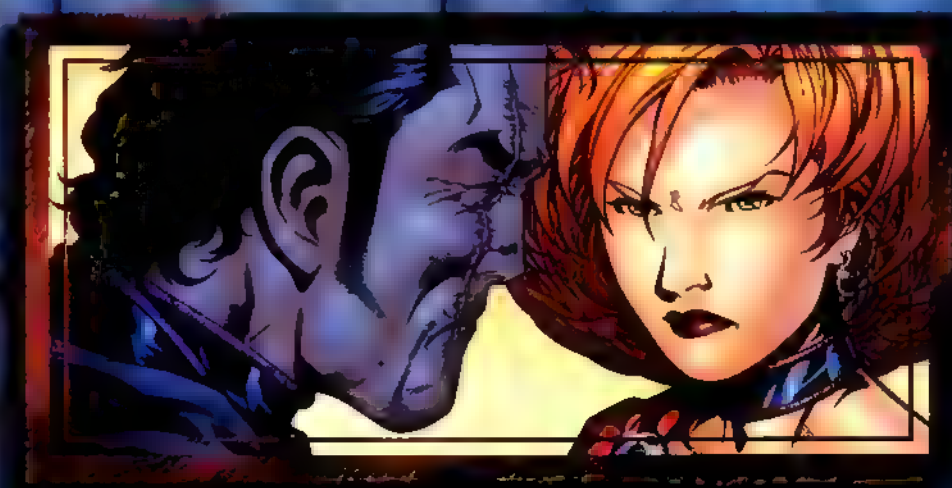


[illegible] Ethan [illegible] Prince [illegible] the West [illegible] Dynasty [illegible] accident [illegible] taking him power, leading to the accidental scarring of [illegible] By [illegible] Then [illegible] was [illegible] imprisoned by [illegible] named Ashleigh, who wanted Ethan to join the Underground cause of freedom for the genetically [illegible] Ethan [illegible] and [illegible] escaped Lesser Races [illegible] hunt [illegible] Meeting Ethan [illegible] to the [illegible] loomed on the horizon.

[illegible] battle [illegible] Omega [illegible] Kosmos, Ethan belonged to [illegible] brother [illegible] Peter was [illegible] by [illegible] Mai Shen [illegible] Thus [illegible] Ethan [illegible] Bernd [illegible] offering their services [illegible]



Ethan [illegible] journeyed [illegible] Eastern [illegible] quest [illegible] against Bron, guided [illegible] Exeter had given him. Ethan [illegible] decides [illegible] scares [illegible] for Ashleigh. He is [illegible] how [illegible] Ashleigh [illegible] is in fact [illegible]



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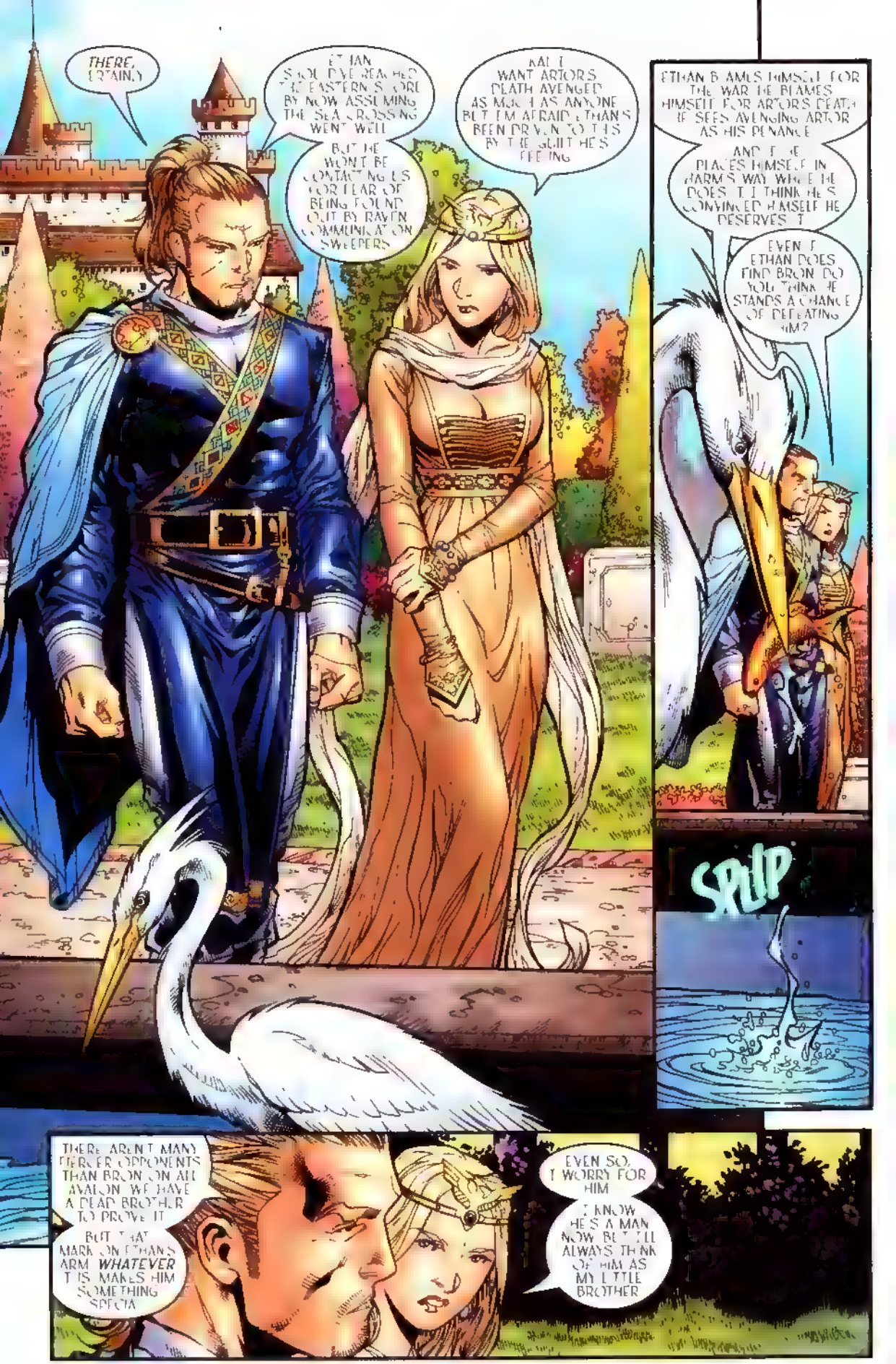
WHERE DO YOU THINK HE IS NOW?


THERE, CERTAINLY
ETHAN SHOULD'VE REACHED THE EASTERN SHORE BY NOW ASSUMING THE SEA CROSSING WENT WELL
BUT HE WON'T BE CONTACTING US FOR FEAR OF BEING FOUND OUT BY RAVEN COMMUNICATION SWEEPERS
KAI I WANT ARTOR'S DEATH AVENGED AS MUCH AS ANYONE BUT I'M AFRAID ETHAN'S BEEN DRIVEN TO THIS BY THE GUILT HE'S FEELING
ETHAN BLAMES HIMSELF FOR THE WAR HE BLAMES HIMSELF FOR ARTOR'S DEATH HE SEES AVENGING ARTOR AS HIS PENANCE
AND SO HE PLACES HIMSELF IN HARM'S WAY WHERE HE DOES IT I THINK HE'S CONVINCED HIMSELF HE DESERVES IT
EVEN IF ETHAN DOES FIND BRON DO YOU THINK HE STANDS A CHANCE OF DEFEATING HIM?
SPLIP
THERE AREN'T MANY FIERCER OPPONENTS THAN BRON ON ALL AVALON WE HAVE A DEAD BROTHER TO PROVE IT
BUT THAT MARK ON ETHAN'S ARM WHATEVER IT IS MAKES HIM SOMETHING SPECIAL
EVEN SO, I WORRY FOR HIM
I KNOW HE'S A MAN NOW BUT I'LL ALWAYS THINK OF HIM AS MY LITTLE BROTHER

YOUR CONCERN FOR ETHAN IS NOT MISPLACED IN FACT I SHARE IT PRINCESS YLENA
PRINCE KA
BERND REGRETS YOU HAVE A HABIT OF APPEARING RATHER UNEXPECTEDLY
I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE IN THE GARDENS
I'VE JUST CONCLUDED A STRATEGY SESSION WITH YOUR FATHER THIS WAR I FEAR WILL DRAG ON
I THOUGHT A STROLL ON THESE PATHS WOULD HELP ME GATHER MY THOUGHTS MY COMPLIMENTS TO THE ROYAL GARDENERS BY THE WAY IT'S LOVELY
I'LL BE SURE TO MENTION IT
ETHAN'S SAFETY HAS BEEN ON MY MIND AS WE
SINCE HE WOULD BE FAR MORE USEFUL TO THE WAR EFFORT *HERE* RATHER THAN OFF PURSUING THIS VENDETTA AGAINST YOUR BROTHER'S MURDERER
WE NEED EVERY ADVANTAGE WE CAN MUSTER IN THIS CONFLICT HIS SIGIL COULD BE QUITE INSTRUMENTAL IN THE WAR'S OUTCOME
YOU SEEM UNUSUALLY INTERESTED IN ETHAN'S SIGIL ESPECIALLY CONSIDERING WHAT HAPPENED WHEN YOU TOUCHED IT

YES THAT
A SURIOUS OCCURENCE INDEED ONE I HOPE TO BE ABLE TO INVESTIGATE UPON ETHAN'S SAFE RETURN
I'VE TAKEN ENOUGH OF YOUR TIME ALREADY I'M SURE YOU HAVE OTHER MATTERS TO ATTEND TO, AS DO I
IF YOU EXCUSE ME
CERTAINLY
DO YOU TRUST HIM?
ATHER SEEMS TO.
I'M NOT QUITE SO CERTAIN MAYBE RECHTS DID COME TO OUR KINGDOM ONLY TO OFFER HIS SERVICES AS A STRATEGIST, BUT I SUSPECT HE HAS SOME OTHER AGENDA
AT LEAST WHERE ETHAN'S CONCERNED
WE'VE BEEN WORRIED ABOUT ETHAN'S WELFARE IT'S POSSIBLE HE'S SAFER WHERE HE IS
AWAY FROM HERE

NO ONE IN THE EAST EXPECTS ME TO BE HERE
BUT THERE'S NO SENSE IN ADVERTISING OURSELVES
I DOUBT WE'LL BE RECOGNIZED BUT BEST NOT TO TAKE ANY CHANCES
READY SA'NAR
I'VE FOLLOWED YOU SINCE BEFORE YOU COULD WALK ETHAN
HEAD ON

IT'S A PRETTY SMALL VILLAGE BUT WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO FIND WHAT WE NEED AND GET OUT AGAIN WITHOUT BEING CAUGHT

THEN WE'LL SEE IF WE CAN FIND ASHLEIGH

IF YOU STILL THINK SEARCHING FOR ASHLEIGH IS THE BEST COURSE OF ACTION

SHANA, THE ONE PART I *KNOW* I CAN CONFRONT BRON IS THE RAVEN KEEP. WHEN ASHLEIGH *FREED* US FROM THE KEEP SHE SAID SHE HAD FRIENDS THERE

IF THOSE FRIENDS CAN HELP ME GET *INTO* THE KEEP, I'LL SLAY BRON IN HIS OWN HOME

AND THAT'S THE ONLY REASON YOU WANT TO FIND ASHLEIGH?

THE *ONLY* REASON

LOOKS LIKE THE RAVEN MILITARY IS ALREADY STARTING TO CONSCRIPT TROOPS. LET'S AVOID

ETHAN! THERE AT THE BACK OF THE DAIS

"...EXETER."

BUT

BUT I KILLED HIM! HE SHOULD BE DEAD!

I DON'T KNOW HOW, BUT HE'S OBVIOUSLY NOT DEAD

HE'S PROBABLY HERE MAKING SURE NO ONE WILL APPROACH ON THEIR HEAD TRIES TO SCAP BY JOINING THE MILITARY HE CAN'T BE LOOKING FOR US

HE COULDN'T EVEN KNOW WE'RE BACK IN EASTERN LANDS

YOU'RE RIGHT. LET'S JUST GET THIS OVER WITH.
WHILE THE REST OF THE TOWN IS GAWKING AT THE SOLDIERS WE CAN GET WHAT WE CAME FOR.
THERE'S THE STABLE.
I DON'T LIKE STEALING. THAT BOAT LAST TIME WE WERE IN THE EAST I'M NOT ENTIRELY COMFORTABLE WITH *THIS*, EITHER.
THERE'S NOT REALLY ANOTHER CHOICE, ETHAN. IS THERE? IF WE'RE GOING TO COVER ANY GROUND WE NEED MOUNTS.
I KNOW.
BUT MY PARENTS DIDN'T RAISE ME TO BE A THIEF. I LEARNED MY LESSON WHEN MY FATHER CAUGHT ME FILCHING PASTRIES FROM THE SERVANTS' LARDER.
DO YOU REMEMBER *THAT?* I WAS SCRUBBING KITCHEN POTS FOR A MONTH.
BDEEP
I JUST WANT TO DO THIS AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE AND GET
OUT OF HERE.

SKRAAKH
I'VE NEVER LOST A BOUNTY, PRINCELING
HOW DID YOU SURVIVE?!
KTANG
KTANG
KTANG

I PUT THIS SWORD THROUGH YOUR CHEST! TO THE HILT!
HOW ARE YOU BE STANDING HERE?!
I TOLD YOU
CHANG
I'M HARD TO KILL
NFF
WRANG
I DOUBT THE SAME IS TRUE OF YOU
AAH?!
KA
CHANK

NOW ETRIAN
NOW IS THE TIME
WEAPON
WHAT'S
KRARUNCH
SOME KIND OF WEAPON, I NEED A
AHF!

HOW DID I
DO THIS?

WHEREVER I CAME FROM
I AT LEAST KNOW WHAT TO DO WITH IT
YOU EXCEED EXPECTATIONS AGAIN, BOY
BUT I'LL STILL HAVE YOUR HEAD AND THE PRICE BRON PUT ON IT
SHEW
CHANG
THE ONLY ONE WHO'S ABOUT TO LOSE HIS HEAD
CHANKT

IS BRON!
SHHINK
ERR
SHHINK
YOU COULDN'T STOP ME LAST TIME
YOU WON'T NOW!
GAAHK!
KLANK!

KRRUMP

WE...?
AREN'T YOU GOING TO GET IT OVER WITH? USE YOUR
YOUR MAGIC SWORD WHATEVER IT IS
NO
I'M NOT
YOU'RE NOT THE ONE I CAME TO KILL
THE FIRST TIME I SAW YOU I THOUGHT YOU WERE PART OF THE UNDERGROUND
I TRUSTED YOU BECAUSE YOU WERE OF THE LESSER RACES
I'LL NEVER MAKE THAT MISTAKE AGAIN
FOR YOUR SAKE
I HOPE WE'VE SEEN THE LAST OF EACH OTHER
PERHAPS, PRINCE NO
AN

YOU DIDN'T SLAY HIM
NO
GOOD
SKINK, THIS MARK ON MY ARM. WHAT CAN'T I DO? IT MAKES ME STRONGER FASTER. IT HEALED ME
NOW THIS.
AND I STILL DON'T EVEN KNOW WHY IT WAS GIVEN TO ME
I'LL SAY THE SAME THAT I'VE SAID BEFORE ETHAN. I BELIEVE THE SIGN IS A GIFT. IF YOU CHOOSE TO MAKE IT SUCH. BUT MORE THAN THAT
I CAN'T TELL YOU
I THOUGHT GIFTS WERE SUPPOSED TO MAKE YOUR LIFE EASIER
ALL THIS ONE'S DONE IS TURN MY LIFE UPSIDE DOWN
AND I'M SURE IT'S NOT THROUGH WITH ME YET

ETHAN!
WHERE ARE WE HEADED?!
WE FOLLOW THE MAP SHINK
NORTH!

THIS IS THE PLACE
BUT THERE'S NOTHING HERE TWO DAYS RIDE AND NOTHING BUT RUINS.
NO SIGN OF ASHLEIGH NO SIGN OF THE UNDERGROUND
SINCE WE'RE HERE, I MIGHT AS WELL HAVE A LOOK AROUND
BE CAREFUL ETHAN SOMETHING FEELS WRONG ABOUT THIS PLACE
ALL MAY NOT BE AS IT APPEARS
I WONDER WHAT THESE RUINS WERE OUT IN THE MIDDLE OF NOWHERE LIKE THIS
A BETTER VANTAGE POINT COULDN'T HURT
THOUGH I DOUBT THERE'S ANYTHING TO SEE

NOTHING AT ALL
JUST CRUMBLING BUILDINGS AND A STAIRCASE LEADING NOWHERE
MAYBE THERE NEVER WAS ANYTHING MORE AND ASHLEIGH WAS JUST
UHH?
WHAT WAS THAT?
SOME KIND OF

SO YOU FOUND US
ANY REASON WE SHOULDN'T KILL YOU WHERE YOU STAND?

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Chaos Far In Scion

What started with a mysterious sigil led to war. Prince Ethan of the West-ruling Heron Dynasty was graced with a mark granting him power, leading to the accidental scarring of Prince Bron of the East-ruling Raven Dynasty during ritual combat.

Ethan surrendered himself to the Ravens but was soon freed from his imprisonment by a woman named Ashleigh who wanted Ethan to join the Underground cause of freedom for the genetically-engineered Lesser Races. Ethan declined her offer and set off for home as war loomed on the horizon.

The battle was met on the Western shore. Ultimate victory belonged to the Herons, but Ethan's oldest brother and heir to the throne, Artor, was brutally slain by Bron. As the war continued, a pair of mysterious travelers, Bernd Rechts and Mai Shen appeared to the Herons and Ravens respectively, offering their services as war advisors.

Ethan vowed vengeance against Bron and journeyed back to Eastern lands where he encountered the bounty hunter Exeter once again. Ethan's own sword shattered during their combat, but he found himself able to generate a fiery blade with his sigil. Ethan left Exeter defeated but alive and journeyed northward to search for Ashleigh and the Underground, still unaware Ashleigh is Bron's sister.

Guided by a locket Ashleigh had given him, Ethan found nothing but remote ruins. At the top of a staircase that seemed to lead nowhere, Ethan stepped through the nothingness and found himself confronted by a threatening collection of Lesser Race beings.

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ETHAN?
ETHAN!

ETHAN!

SKINK

DON'T DO ANYTHING SUDDEN

SAGE ADVICE

I'M NOT LOOKING FOR TROUBLE

AND I DON'T MEAN ANY HARM TO THE UNDERGROUND

BUT IF I'M FORCED TO DEFEND MYSELF

I'M CAPABLE OF DOING SO

I CAME HERE TO FIND ASHLEIGH

I'M TAKEN THE FREE NAME EITON
YOU'RE WHO YOU APPEAR TO BE?
DEPENDS ON WHO YOU THINK I AM. MY NAME IS ETHAN
AND THIS IS MY
FRIEND SKINK
HOW'S THIS PLACE HIDDEN? I STUMBLED INTO IT
LITERALLY
HOLOGRAM GENERATORS
WHAT YOU SEE OUT THERE IS ALL THAT'S LEFT OF THE FIRST FREE CITY FOR LESSER RACES N RAVN LANDS. THE RUINS ARE REMOTE ENOUGH THAT NO ONE EVER PASSES THROUGH
BUT WE SCREEN ANY SIGN THE SANCTUARY EXISTS COME WITH ME. I'LL SHOW YOU THE REST
YOU NEED NOT BE A SERVANT TITLE BROTHER
WE'RE FREE HERE ALL OF US
I'M NOT SURE WHAT YOU WERE EXPECTING

BUT THIS IS THE *SANCTUARY*

IT WAS THE LARGEST STRUCTURE IN THE RUIN COMPLEX PROBABLY A CATHEDRAL ENOUGH OF IT LEFT STANDING SO WE COULD REBUILD IT MOST OF THE OTHER BUILDINGS AREN'T EVEN *SHELLS*

WE TAKE IN ANY WHO NEED A HOME BUT AS YOU SEE WE'RE ALREADY STRETCHED BEYOND OUR CAPACITY MAINTAINING OUR FOOD STORES IS A CONSTANT STRUGGLE

AND THEY KEEP COMING A FEW MORE EVERY DAY IF THE WAR GOES ON

WE EXPECT THE TRICKLE TO BECOME A FLOOD

THEY COME BECAUSE AT LEAST THERE'S HOPE HERE

COMPARED TO THE SLAVERY THEY'VE LIVED WITH SINCE BIRTH

THE UNDERGROUND INTENDS TO WIN FREEDOM FOR ALL LESSER RACES BY WHATEVER MEANS NECESSARY THE SANCTUARY'S A *START*

IT PROVES SUCH A THING IS POSSIBLE

ETHAN THERE'S SOMEONE YOU SHOULD MEET

ANNIE AND HER SON ESCAPED THEIR SERVITUDE AND WERE ABLE TO REACH THE SANCTUARY A FEW WEEKS AGO
HER HUSBAND THE CHILD'S FATHER WAS TO HAVE JOINED THEM HERE
MAMA
BUT HE WAS SLAIN BY PRINCE BRON CUT DOWN AT THE FOOT OF THE STEPS OUTSIDE BEFORE WE COULD DO ANYTHING TO STOP IT
HE'D BEEN BRON'S PERSONAL SERVANT FOR YEARS
THEM
SHHH IT'S ALL RIGHT WE'RE SAFE NOW
YOU SHOULD BE ASHAMED COMING TO THIS PLACE!
YOUR KIND HAS NO RIGHT HERE!
WHAT?
BUT I'M NOT GOING TO HURT YOU YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE AFRAID OF
THE LEARN TO FEAR HUMANS OR WE TEND NOT TO LIVE VERY LONG
THE ONLY HUMAN WE'VE COME TO TRUST IS ASHLEIGH
WHERE IS ASHLEIGH? I'D LIKE TO SEE HER

NOT HERE
WELL
DO YOU KNOW WHEN SHE'LL BE BACK?
HARD TO SAY
SHE COMES WHEN SHE CAN. SHE LEAVES WHEN SHE HAS TO
I SEE
YOU'RE NOT HERE TO HELP US, ARE YOU?
I'M

THEN I'M AFRAID I CAN'T HELP YOU
WAIT
WAIT
PLEASE. IT'S NOT THAT I'M NOT SYMPATHETIC TO WHAT YOU'RE DOING HERE. IT'S NOT THAT AT ALL...
I RETURNED TO THE EAST BECAUSE BRON KILLED MY BROTHER. HE CUT ARTOR'S THROAT AND LET HIS LIFE RUN OUT ONTO THE EARTH. ARTOR GASPING HIS LAST BREATHS THROUGH HIS OWN BLOOD.
YOU WANT AS MUCH TO GET YOU CLOSE TO BRON SO YOU CAN KILL HIM.
YOU REALLY DON'T KNOW MUCH ABOUT HER, DO YOU?
NO.
NO. NOT REALLY.
I SWORE TO AVENGE ARTOR'S MURDER. BLOOD FOR BLOOD.
ASH HAD FREED ME FROM THE RAVEN KEEP WHEN I WAS IMPRISONED THERE. I THOUGHT SHE MIGHT BE ABLE TO SLIP ME INTO THE KEEP SO I CAN GET TO BRON.

SHE'S FAR'S PRIVATE KEEPS TO HERSELF QUITE A BIT
IT'S NOT FOR ME TO TELL YOU MORE
SHE'S NOT HERE I DON'T KNOW WHEN SHE WILL BE HERE
THIS IS A SANCTUARY I WON'T TURN YOU OUT BUT I DON'T KNOW HOW WELCOME YOU'LL BE MADE TO FEEL YOU'RE NOT HERE TO SUPPORT OUR CAUSE
NOT I UNDERSTAND
WAIT SO?
WE CAN'T SPARE MUCH IN THE WAY OF SUPPLIES BUT WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO SCRAPE UP SOMETHING FOR YOU AND YOUR MOUNTS
THANK YOU THAT'S VERY KIND
I WANT YOU TO KNOW I'M NOT TURNING MY BACK ON THE UNDERGROUND I DO WANT TO HELP YOU
BUT I SWORE TO MY FAMILY THAT I'D AVENGE MY BROTHER YOU UNDERSTAND THAT DON'T YOU?
OF COURSE
I UNDERSTAND PERFECTLY

THAT DIDN'T ACCOMPLISH ANYTHING EXCEPT ALIENATING ME FROM THE UNDERGROUND
I'M NOT SURE WHAT YOUR NEW PLAN OF ACTION IS GOING TO ACCOMPLISH. EITHER THAN EXCEPT GETTING YOU KILLED
RIDING INTO THE RAVEN CAPITAL AND TRYING TO SNEAK INTO THE KEEP DOESN'T STRIKE ME AS THE WISEST COURSE
I'M PERFECTLY WILLING TO CONSIDER ALTERNATIVES. SKINK THERE JUST AREN'T ANY
I DON'T HAVE A WAY OF BURING BRON SOMEPLACE THAT WOULD FAVOR ME, SO I HAVE TO GO TO HIM
HERE
THIS LOOKS TO BE AS GOOD A PLACE AS ANY TO CAMP
I CAME TO SLAY BRON. THAT'S WHAT I'M GOING TO DO AFTER THAT
WHEN YOU WERE BRANDED WITH THE SIGIL, THE PATH OF YOUR LIFE CHANGED. THAN IT'S NOT POSSIBLE FOR YOU TO KNOW WHAT YOUR FUTURE HOLDS
I CAN'T TELL YOUR DESTINY
I'LL GATHER WOOD FOR A FIRE. THERE'S A CHILL ROLLING IN
I'LL SEE TO OUR MOUNTS

WHOA STEADY THERE
STEADY!
COME ON YOU AN GRAZE IN THE CLEARING UNT
WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO YOU TWO? WHY ARE YOU SO
SPOOKED?
BEETHAN

ARTOR IS T
CAN T REALLY BE YOU?
THINGS?
WHAT THINGS?
ARTOR HOW CAN YOU BE HERE? I STOPPED BELIEVING IN GHOSTS WHEN I WAS A CHILD

I UNDERSTAND YOU DIED, ARTOR
I DIDN'T COME TO DWELL ON THE THINGS THAT CAN'T
I'M SO SORRY
YOU MEAN THE WAR?
UP UNTIL NOW THE ONLY THING THE SIGILS DONE IS CAUSE SUFFERING I'M LEARNING WHAT IT'S CAPABLE OF
OR AT LEAST WHAT IT'S BEEN CAPABLE OF SO FAR BUT I STILL HAVE NO IDEA WHAT IT IS OR HOW I GOT IT
IS THAT WHY YOU'RE HERE? CAN YOU TELL ME WHAT IT MEANS?

AND
YOU MUST BE THE WARRIOR
WHAT KIND OF BATTLE?
I NEED TO KNOW MORE, ARTOR
WHO GAVE ME THE SIGN? WHAT DO THEY WANT?
AND YOU ALREADY SEE MORE THAN ALL

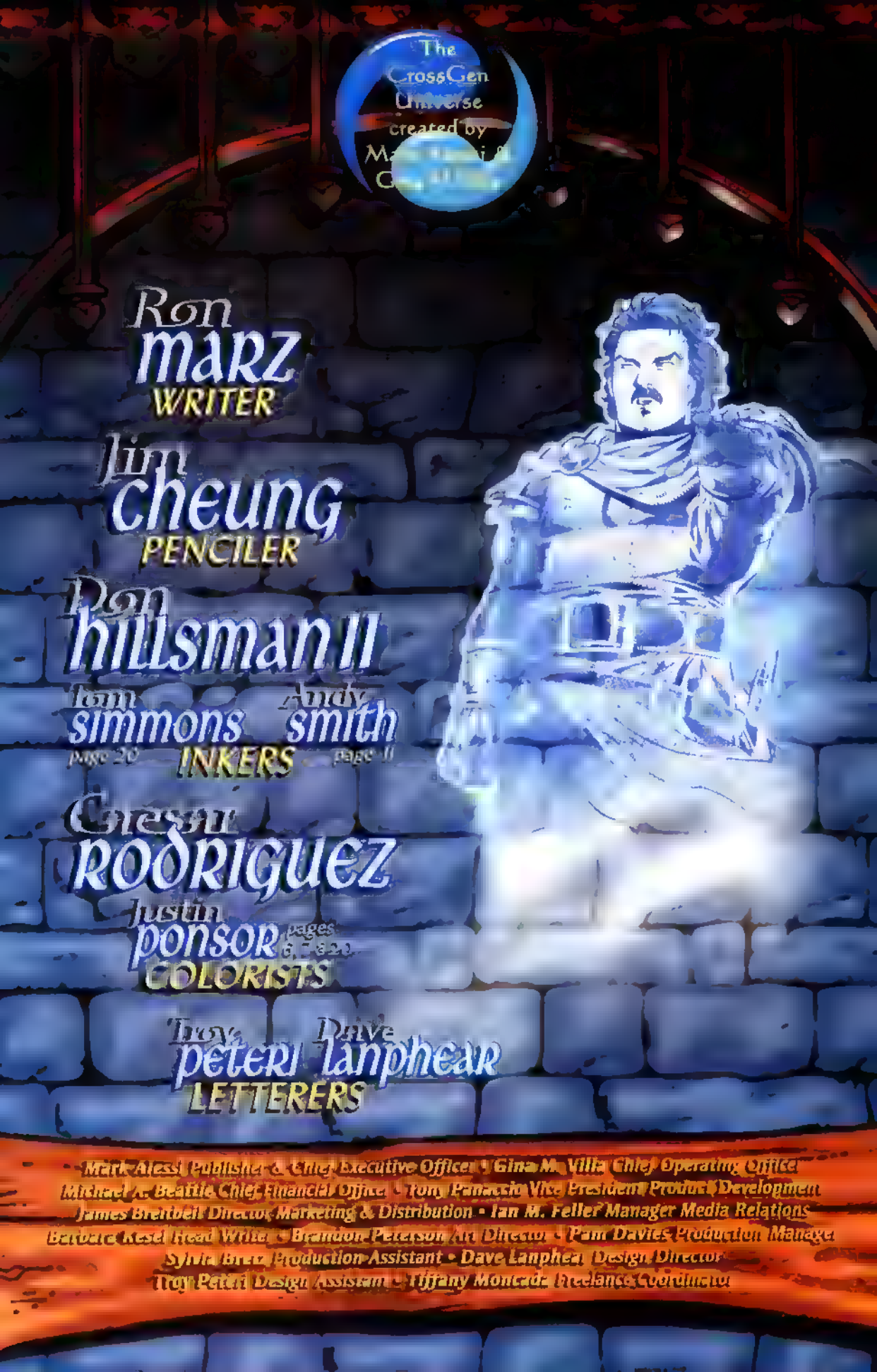
CAN YOU STAY JUST A LITTLE LONGER?
STAY AND TELL ME SOMETHING MORE? ANYTHING?
ARTOR PLEASE
WILL SEE YOU AGAIN?
ETHAN?
T WAS ARTOR HE WAS HERE AND HE SEEMED
SO REAL
REAL ENOUGH ETHAN
E WAS REAL ENOUGH

I'M GLAD TO SEE YOU TOO
SORRY I'VE BEEN AWAY A WHILE BUT I HAD THINGS TO DO I HOPE MY BROTHERS AT LEAST BEEN
GRRR
EASY BOY
TREATING YOU WELL
WELCOME HOME ASHLEIGH

IT'S ALWAYS SUCH A PLEASURE TO SEE MY LITTLE SISTER
BRON
I DIDN'T HEAR YOU COME IN
A LITTLE STARTLING WHEN A FAMILY MEMBER APPEARS UNEXPECTEDLY
ISN'T IT?
OUR RECENT ENCOUNTER? I TOLD NO ONE
NOT KORT NOT FATHER
I'M CERTAIN YOU WEREN'T MOTIVATED BY CHARITY OR A SENSE OF JUSTICE
REMEMBER MY WARNING STAY OUT OF MY WAY
IS MY DEAR SISTER THREATENING ME IN OUR OWN HOME? I'M CERTAIN THAT CAN'T BE THE CASE
WE'VE WELCOMED A VISITOR SINCE YOU WERE LAST HERE
AS I FIGH THIS IS MALSHEN SHE'S OFFERED HERSELF TO US AS AN ADVISOR IN THE WAR EFFORT

I'M PLEASED TO FINALLY MEET YOU AS LIGHT SEEMS OTHER DUTIES KEEP YOU AWAY FROM THE PALACE SO OFTEN
I'M PLEASED I WAS ABLE TO RETURN IT SEEMS MY PRESENCE MIGHT BE NEEDED HERE
WE'LL ALL BE NEEDED AS THIS WAR PLAYS OUT. I LOOK FORWARD TO PROVIDING WHATEVER HELP I CAN TO THE RAVEN CAUSE
BRON AND I HAVE BEEN WORKING TOGETHER QUITE CLOSELY
BUT I'M SURE YOUR FIRST LOYALTY IS TO OUR FATHER, THE KING
AS IS MINE
HOW IS FATHER?
FATHER'S THE SAME FATHER'S FINE
ANXIOUS TO SEE HIS ONLY DAUGHTER AGAIN I SUSPECT
THEN I SHOULDN'T KEEP HIM WAITING
NICE TO HAVE MET YOU MAI SHEN. I'M SURE WE'LL CROSS PATHS AGAIN
I'M SURE
I LOOK FORWARD TO IT

SHE SHOULD BE TROUBLESOME
SHE'S ALWAYS BEEN TROUBLESOME
NOT TO WORRY
WHEN MY PLANS FOR YOU ARE COMPLETE
NEITHER ANYTHING NOR YOUR FATHER WILL BE OF ANY CONCERN TO US



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I'D HEARD THE STORIES
EVERYONE HEARD THE STORIES
BOUNTY
PART I
Ron Marz ~ story
Andrea Di Vito ~ pencils
Don Hillsman II ~ inks
Cæsar Rodriguez ~ colors
Troy & Dave ~ letters

THE ONE ABOUT FOLLOWING A RUNNER INTO THE SAND WASTES AND DRAGGING BACK THE CORPSE
THE ONE ABOUT DESTROYING AN ENTIRE NORTHERN BARBARIAN VILLAGE TO BRING BACK A RUNNER THE CLAN HAD ADOPTED YEARS BEFORE
AND THE ONE ABOUT THE ESCAPED SLAVE WHO STOWED AWAY ON A MOWERSHIP BOUND FOR THE WEST
THE SHIP WAS MILES OUT TO SEA BY THE TIME HE CAUGHT UP TO IT
THEY SAY HE SANK THE SHIP
EVERY LAST SOUL ABOARD LOST AT SEA
JUST SO *ONE* BOUNTY WOULDN'T SLIP THROUGH HIS GRASP

IS IT TRUE? WHO KNOWS? YOU HEAR SO MUCH DOESN'T SEEM POSSIBLE IT'S ALL TRUE
BUT I WOULDN'T DOUBT IT
I WOULDN'T DOUBT ANYTHING I'VE HEARD ABOUT EXETER.
LUCKY IF I HADN'T BEEN HERE
THEY TELL TALES OF HOW BIG HE IS. THEY'RE NOT TRUE
HE'S BIGGER
WHO WOULD'VE SAVED YOU?
GH

RIGHT
WHERE DID HE COME FROM? PICK A VERSION
ONE SAYS EXETER WAS BORN OF LESSER RACES IN HERON LANDS BORN A FREE MAN
WE CAN DO IT THAT WAY
BORN FREE WHAT MUST THAT BE LIKE?
KLIKT
THEN HE CAME EAST SOME TALES HOLD THAT HE KILLED A MAN AND FLED ACROSS THE GREAT SEA TO ESCAPE JUSTICE OTHERS HAVE IT THAT HIS FAMILY WAS SLAIN
DOESN'T REALLY MATTER HE DID COME EAST
AND STARTED COLLECTING THE BOUNTIES ON ESCAPED SLAVES AND PRISONERS
RUNNERS
I SUPPOSE IT'S POSSIBLE EXETERS FROM THE WEST

I CAN'T EVEN GUESS HOW EXETER WOULD'VE FREED HIMSELF. I KNOW HOW *RARE* A THING FREEDOM IS FOR LESSER RACES IN THE EAST
HE'S THE MONSTER HIDING UNDER THE BRIDGE. THE SOUND OF A SNAPPING BRANCH IN THE FOREST AT NIGHT
CHOK
BUT I DON'T THINK SO
I THINK HE WAS BORN A SLAVE. YOU CAN RECOGNIZE IT WHEN YOU'RE BORN A SLAVE YOURSELF
BUT IT'S OBVIOUS WHY HE *STAYS* FREE. HE'S THE TALE MOTHERS TELL THEIR CHILDREN TO KEEP THEM FROM MISBEHAVING
WOULD *YOU* RUN IF YOU THOUGHT THERE WAS A CHANCE HE MIGHT BE FOLLOWING?
THIS ISN'T ABOUT *ANY* OF THAT, THOUGH
WHAT I WANT TO KNOW IS *WHY*
WHAT MAKES A SLAVE HUNT SLAVES? WHY DOES SOMEONE OF THE LESSER RACES PREY UPON HIS OWN PEOPLE?
KRUNCH!

WHY?
MMN
FINE CHASE NESSA YOU AT LEAST KEPT MY INTEREST
BUT WE'RE FINISHED NOW
THE RAVENS WILL PAY HANDSOMELY FOR SOMEONE SO HIGHLY PLACED IN THE UNDERGROUND'S HIERARCHY
HOW CAN YOU DO THIS TO YOUR OWN KIND?
HOW DO YOU LOOK IN THE MIRROR?!
I DON'T OWN ONE
THEY SAY HE'S NEVER LOST A BOUNTY
HE STILL HASN'T
continued...

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Scion
CÆSAR

Thus Far in Scion

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What started with a mysterious sigil led to war. Prince Ethan of the West-ruling Heron Dynasty was graced with a mark granting him power, leading to the accidental scarring of Prince Bron of the East-ruling [illegible] Dynasty during ritual combat.

Ethan surrendered himself to the Ravens but was soon freed from his imprisonment by a woman named Ashleigh who wanted Ethan to join the Underground cause of freedom for the genetically engineered Lesser Races. Ethan declined her offer and set off for home as war loomed on the horizon.

The battle was met on the Western shore. Ultimate victory belonged to the Herons, but Ethan's oldest brother and heir to the throne, Artor, was brutally slain by [illegible]. As war continued, a pair of mysterious travelers, Bernd Rechts and Mai Shen, appeared to the Herons and Ravens respectively, offering their services as war advisors.

Ethan vowed vengeance against Bron and returned to Eastern lands accompanied by his friend Skink. Ethan first sought out the Underground's hidden Sanctuary in hopes of finding Ashleigh, unaware she is actually Bron's sister.

When he discovered Ashleigh was not present, Ethan set off for the Raven Keep, intending to confront Bron. During the journey Ethan encountered what appeared to be Artor's ghost. Before vanishing, the shade hinted at Ethan's destiny and the nature of the sigil.

Meanwhile, Ashleigh arrived home at the Raven Keep, where Bron introduced her to Mai Shen.

ROUSE YOURSELVES!
ROUSE YOURSELVES, THEY'RE STORMING THE WALLS!
THE HERONS ARE
GHLLK!

FOR KING
FOR KINGDOM
FORWARD!

TAKE THE GARRISON!
EYAAAH!
FIRST BLOOD TO YLENA!
FOLLOW THE PRINCESS!
THEY'RE EVERYWHERE
FALL BACK! FALL—
GAH!
UCK!

DAMN!
THE ONE COASTAL GARRISON WE'VE YET TO REINFORCE AND THAT'S WHERE THEY DECIDE TO LAND
FATHER'S GOING TO BE SO PLEASED
THEY'RE HERE FATHER THE HERONS LANDED THEIR FORCES HERE THEY'RE ALREADY OVERWHELMING US
YES
THE GARRISON WILL BE LOST, KORT?
WE'LL GAIN NOTHING BY THROWING AWAY LIVES IN A FUTILE ENGAGEMENT
PULL BACK WHAT TROOPS YOU CAN, THEN GET TO YOUR MOUNT AND RETURN TO THE KEEP
AS YOU COMMAND FATHER

I'M SORRY
WE ARE AT WAR, FATHER!
I TOLD YOU WE SHOULDN'T HAVE BEEN LEFT IN CHARGE OF A GARRISON! KORT'S NOT ENOUGH OF A WARRIOR TO BEAR THAT KIND OF RESPONSIBILITY
I KNOW
AND WHAT WOULD YOU HAVE DONE DIFFERENTLY, BRON?
NOT BEEN SURPRISED? OR SOMEHOW PRODUCED MORE THAN THE HANDFUL OF MEN ASSIGNED TO DEFEND THAT GARRISON?
DEEP
CALM YOURSELF
HOW, WHEN HERON TROOPS NOW WALK OUR SHORES?
BRON

OUR AGGRESSION IS BETTER TURNED UPON THE ENEMY NOT ONE ANOTHER
MALSHEN
YOU HEARD?
AN UNFORTUNATE DEFEAT
BUT NOT DEVASTATING. THE COASTLINE THERE IS PARTICULARLY INHOSPITABLE FOR A LARGE-SCALE LANDING
THE HERONS WON'T BE ABLE TO INSERT A LARGE FORCE BEFORE WE CAN DISPATCH REINFORCEMENTS TO BLOCK THEIR ADVANCE
OUR EFFORTS ARE BEST SPENT ADDRESSING THE STRATEGIC CONCERNS AT HAND
RATHER THAN PLACING BLAME FOR WHAT HAS ALREADY BEEN LOST
I'M PLEASED *SOMEONE* HERE HAS A CONSTRUCTIVE CONTRIBUTION

THE HERONS STRUCK WHERE WE WERE LEAST PREPARED TO DEFEND A LANDING, AS IF THEY KNEW
PERHAPS THEY DID KING VIKTOR IF NOTHING ELSE THEY WERE ABLE TO PREDICT OUR WEAKNESS
ATTACKING A FORTRESS THAT WAS APT TO BE LESS PROTECTED, EVEN THOUGH IT REPRESENTS A LESS ENTICING LANDING SITE, IS THE SAME COURSE I WOULD HAVE PURSUED
IT'S POSSIBLE YOU'RE NOT THE ONLY ONES WHO HAVE OBTAINED STRATEGIC ADVICE FROM AN OUTSIDE SOURCE
WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE WHERE THEY GOT THE IDEA? NOW THEY HAVE A FOOTHOLD
WE SHOULD HAVE INVADED THEIR SHORES AGAIN RATHER THAN WAITING FOR THEM TO COME TO US
WE NEED TO TAKE THE WAR TO THEM!
OUR FIRST LANDING, AT POINT KORDAY WAS AN UTTER DISASTER
OR HAD YOU FORGOTTEN THE ROUT WE SUFFERED UNDER YOUR COMMAND?
THEY KNEW!
THEY KNEW WHERE WE WERE GOING TO LAND AND THEY SURPRISED US!

YOU ACT AS IF THE BATTLE WAS DEVOID OF ACHIEVEMENT. I SLEW ONE OF THEIR PRINCES
AND IT SERVED ONLY TO STIFFEN THE HERON RESOLVE. YOU COULD HAVE MADE A PRISONER OF HIM
BUT INSTEAD YOU CHOSE TO MAKE A MARTYR OF YOUR ENEMY
I SALVAGED WHAT I COULD AND ESCAPED WITH ENOUGH OF OUR ARMY INTACT TO FIGHT ANOTHER DAY
IS ANYTHING EVER GOOD ENOUGH FOR YOU?
ANYTHING?!
I WON'T TOLERATE THESE OUTBURSTS IN MY WAR ROOM
LEAVE
AS YOU WISH
BUT I SWEAR TO YOU FATHER
THE DAY WILL COME WHEN YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO DISMISS ME SO EASILY

DOES HE EXPECT ME TO SWALLOW THESE IND GNITIES FOREVER?!
HOW LONG DOES HE THINK HE CAN PUSH ME BEFORE –
YOU AND FATHER HAD A DISAGREEMENT?
HOW UNLIKE YOU TWO
GRRRR
Shhh
I KEEP THINK NG MAYBE SOMEONE MISTREATED REAVER AS A PUP THAT MIGHT EXPLAIN WHERE HE GOT THIS TEMPER OF HIS
BUT HE'S LEARN NG TO CONTRO IT
I'M IN NO MOOD AS.L.EIGH
NOT AFTER LEARNING OF THE MILITARY DEBACLE LED BY OUR DEAR BROTHER

REALLY?
I'M SURPRISED SUCH A THING COULD HAPPEN NOW THAT WE HAVE A BRILLIANT STRATEGIC MIND IN OUR MIDST
EVEN THOSE WHO ARE WELL PREPARED FOR CONFLICT CAN STILL BE SURPRISED AND DEFEATED
YOU'D DO WELL TO REMEMBER THAT
YOU'D DO WELL TO REMEMBER YOUR ADVICE EXTENDS TO MILITARY AFFAIRS
NOT FAMILY ONES
DO YOU UNDERSTAND ME?
THERE'S VERY LITTLE ABOUT YOU I DON'T UNDERSTAND
YOU'RE THE ONE WITHOUT ANY CONCEPT OF WHO YOU'RE DEALING WITH BUT IF YOU STAY THIS COURSE
I PROMISE YOU YOU'LL FIND OUT
OH, I INTEND TO FIND OUT
YOU'VE KEPT MY HOUND AT YOUR SIDE LONG ENOUGH, SISTER. I WANT HIM BACK

HERE, REAVER COME TO ME
REAVER COME!
COME!
DAMN YOU DOG! COME HERE!
I DON'T THINK HE'S LISTENING DESPITE YOUR TONE
OR PERHAPS BECAUSE OF IT
ENJOY THESE PETTY VICTORIES WHILE YOU CAN, ASHLEIGH. ONE DAY THE ORDER HERE WILL CHANGE
AND YOU'D BE WISE TO BE CAREFUL WHEN IT DOES

FATHER?
I CHECKED THE WAR ROOM, BUT THEY TOLD ME YOU'D ALREADY LEFT
I THOUGHT THIS MIGHT BE THE BEST PLACE TO LOOK
YOU KNOW ME TOO WELL, MAGISTER
THERE WAS NOTHING MORE TO BE ACCOMPLISHED BY STARING AT THE SAME MAP TABLES AND CALCULATING TROOP STRENGTHS YET AGAIN
THE HERONS HAVE LANDED AND TAKEN A COASTAL GARRISON. THE ONE I'D PLACED UNDER KORT'S COMMAND
THANKFULLY HE WAS ABLE TO AVOID CAPTURE
OR A WORSE FATE

I COME TO THE THRONE HALL HOPING TO DRAW INSPIRATION FROM THOSE WHO GUIDED OUR DYNASTY IN THE PAST
PARTICULARLY WHEN IT'S OUR DYNASTY'S *FUTURE* THAT CONCERNS ME
BECAUSE OF THE WAR?
NO
NOT THE WAR
WALK WITH ME
I WAS STILL A YOUNG MAN WHEN I INHERITED THE THRONE FROM MY MOTHER NOW MY BONES CREAK WHEN I GET OUT OF BED EACH MORNING
I'M OLD, ASHLEIGH NO ONE RULES FOREVER
BRON IS THE ELDEST HE'S TO FOLLOW ME TO THAT THRONE
AND HE'S NOT READY I HAVE GRAVE DOUBTS HE EVER *WILL* BE
THE MANTLE OF RULERSHIP DOES NOT REST EASILY ON THOSE OF HIS TEMPERAMENT
HE'S TOO QUICK TO ANGER TOO PRONE TO CASUAL VIOLENCE
PERHAPS HIS NATURE IS THE PRODUCT OF HIS MOTHER NOT BEING ALIVE TO RAISE HIM I DON'T KNOW

GENERATIONS OF OUR FAMILY HAVE TAKEN THEIR PLACE ON THE RAVEN THRONE SOME BETTER SOME WORSE BUT THE *DYNASTY* HAS ALWAYS SURVIVED
PLEASE, *SIT*
WHAT?
FATHER IT'S NOT MY PLACE TO SIT UPON THE THRONE
I WISH I *WERE* IT WOULD BE
SAVE FOR THE SIMPLE TIMING OF YOUR BIRTH IF ONLY YOU'D BEEN BORN FIRST *YOU* WOULD BE IN LINE TO RULE
THERE'S NOTHING TO BE DONE ABOUT IT FATHER
WHATEVER IT IS FAULTS IT'S BRON'S BIRTHRIGHT
TRADITION DEMANDS THE ELDEST ASCENDS TO THE THRONE
PERHAPS IT'S TIME TRADITION IS BROKEN
YOU'RE NOT SERIOUSLY CONSIDERING SUCH A THING?
I MIGHT
IF I KNEW MY CHOSEN SUCCESSOR WOULD PLACE NO *OTHER* CAUSES BEFORE THOSE OF HER BLOOD, ME
OTHER CAUSES? I'M NOT SURE WHAT
DON'T INSULT ME. DO YOU THINK I RULE AN ENTIRE KINGDOM BUT REMAIN IGNORANT OF MY OWN FAMILY'S WORKINGS?
BRON *DID* TELL YOU

BRON TOLD ME NOTHING
I'VE BEEN AWARE OF YOUR INVOLVEMENT WITH THE UNDERGROUND FOR SOME TIME. THE CLUES WERE PLAIN ENOUGH
BUT AS LONG AS YOU DIDN'T CREATE UNDUE STRIFE WITHIN THE KINGDOM
I LOOKED THE OTHER WAY
TRUE PASSION FOR A CAUSE IS AN ADMIRABLE QUALITY ASHLEIGH. BUT YOUR PASSION IS MISPLACED
IT'S TIME YOU PUT ASIDE THE THINGS OF YOUR WILD YOUTH AND TOOK YOUR PLACE WITH YOUR FAMILY
IT'S POSSIBLE SOME ACCOMODATION EVENTUALLY CAN BE MADE FOR THE UNDERGROUND AND LESSER RACES
BUT NOW YOUR LOYALTY MUST BE HERE
I MUST HAVE YOUR SUPPORT IN WHAT'S AHEAD. I'VE INDULGED YOUR INDISCRETIONS AND ASKED LITTLE OF YOU IN RETURN
NOW I ASK YOU TO PLACE YOUR DYNASTY AND YOUR KINGDOM FIRST
WILL YOU GIVE ME YOUR LOYALTY WHEN I NEED IT?
BUT
BUT, FATHER, I'M
YES

EVERYTHING MOCKS ME
MY SISTER MY FATHER
EVEN MY OWN FACE!
WHAT DOES IT GAIN MY FATHER TO HUMILIATE ME? HE TREATS ME LIKE A CHILD AT EVERY TURN
BECAUSE YOU LET HIM GOAD YOU INTO ACTING LIKE A CHILD AT EVERY TURN
YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO DEAL WITH YOUR FATHER
AND SOONER RATHER THAN LATER

DEAL WITH HIM? MY FATHER IS KING. I WILL BE KING AFTER HIM. ALL I NEED DO IS WAIT
AND WHAT I WANT WILL COME TO ME
SO YOU BELIEVE
BUT YOUR FATHER BELIEVES YOU'RE NOT READY FOR THE THRONE. BELIEVES YOU NEVER WILL BE. THOSE WERE HIS OWN WORDS TONIGHT
TO YOUR SISTER
THEY'RE CONSPIRING TO BREACH THE ORDER OF SUCCESSION AND PUT ASHLEIGH ON THE THRONE IN YOUR PLACE
BUT THE FIRST BORN HAS ALWAYS INHERITED THE THRONE. EVEN MY FATHER WOULDN'T CONSIDER SUCH A BREAK WITH TRADITION
HOW COULD YOU POSSIBLY KNOW ANY OF THIS?
YOU KNOW BETTER THAN TO DOUBT ME
WHY WOULD HE BETRAY ME SO?!
WHAT MORE MUST I DO?!

BRON
YOU KNOW WHAT YOU MUST DO
I CAN MAKE YOU POWERFUL
I AM POWERFUL I'M A RAVEN PRINCE HEIR TO THE THRONE
ARE YOU?
YOUR FATHER WILL NEVER LET YOU ASCEND TO THE THRONE
I CAN MAKE YOU
POWERFUL
WHAT ARE YOU?!
MORE THAN YOU CAN IMAGINE
MY KIND CALL THEMSELVES THE FIRST
BUT YOU WOULD CALL US GODS EVEN THE LEAST OF MY PEOPLE HOLDS MORE POWER THAN YOU'VE EVER DREAMED OF
SHE WHOM I SERVE SENT ME HERE TO MANAGE THIS CONFLICT AND KEEP WATCH ON YOUR ENEMY ETHAN THIS WORLD'S SIGIL BEARER
IT WOULDN'T DO TO HAVE HIM FALL UNDER THE WRONG INFLUENCE AND BECOME A DEXTER TOO.

THAT WAS MY DUTY, AND I'LL SEE IT THROUGH BUT I'VE GROWN
FOND
OF THIS WORLD I INTEND TO HAVE IT FOR MY OWN
BUT I CAN SHARE IT WITH YOU, DEAR BRON IF YOU'RE WILLING TO DO WHAT MUST BE DONE
IF THAT'S WHAT YOU WANT
YES
THAT'S WHAT I WANT

WHAT DID YOU DO TO ME?
GAVE YOU A SMALL PART OF WHAT I AM
AND WHAT CAN I DO?
ANYTHING
ANYTHING AT ALL

I STILL DON'T THINK THIS IS A GOOD IDEA, ETHAN
WALKING RIGHT THROUGH THE FRONT GATES OF THE RAVEN CAPITAL IS ASKING FOR
YOU THERE!
STAND WHERE YOU ARE!
I HATE IT WHEN YOU'RE RIGHT
THOUGHT YOU COULD JUST STROL INTO THE CITY AND NOT BE RECOGNIZED?
YOU'RE STUPID AS WELL AS UGLY LESSER RACE FILTH
NGH!

I REALLY THOUGHT IT WAS *US* THEY WANTED. SKINK.
TRUTHFULLY, I'M SHOCKED WE MADE IT THIS FAR
I SWORE VENGEANCE UPON BRON
I'M NOT GOING TO BE STOPPED NOW
NOT WHEN I'M SO CLOSE!

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Scion

ISSUE #12 ON SALE MAY 23rd

LONG LIVE the King!

written by:
Ron Marz

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HOW MANY OTHERS HAVE BEEN IN THIS POSITION?
BOUNTY
PART III
Ron Marz — story
Andrea D. Vito — pencils
Tom Simmons
John Dell — inks
Andrew Hennessy
Jason Lambert — colors
Troy Peteri — letters

CAPTURED BY EXETER BEING HAULED BACK TO SLAVERY

OR *WORSE*

ALL SO HE CAN COLLECT A BOUNTY

IT ALWAYS COMES BACK TO *WHY* WHAT DRIVES HIM TO THIS?

WHY DOES SOMEONE OF THE LESSER RACES HUNT HIS OWN?

AND IS THERE A WAY TO REACH HIM?

WE'RE THE SAME

YET YOU CHAIN ME LIKE AN ANIMAL

ARE YOU EVEN LISTENING TO ME?

I CAN TELL YOU'VE BEEN A PART OF IT. YOU WERE A SLAVE ONCE TOO, WEREN'T YOU?

YOU'VE *LIVED* THIS LIFE AND YOU STILL DRAG US BACK TO IT

YOU KNOW IT'S WRONG EVEN IF YOU DON'T DARE ADMIT IT TO YOURSELF. YOU *KNOW*

YOU CAN BE A PART OF ENDING IT. THAT'S WHAT THE UNDERGROUND WANTS. FREEDOM FOR *ALL* OF US

WE *NEED* SOMEONE LIKE YOU. WE'RE SLAVES, NOT WARRIORS

JOIN US. YOU CAN REDEEM YOUR PAST

IF YOU HAVE THE COURAGE TO CHANGE YOUR FUTURE

ENOUGH

WHAT I DO WHO I AM
S MY CONCERN KEEP YOUR SILENCE
OR I SWEAR TO YOU YOU WON'T LIVE LONG ENOUGH FOR ME TO COLLECT THE PRICE ON YOUR HEAD
I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT WANT TO AGAIN BE THE MAN YOU ONCE WERE
WELL?
KLIKT

THEY SAY HE'S NEVER LOST A BOUNTY
NEVER
WILL YOU BE PART OF THE UNDERGROUND? I CAN BRING YOU TO THE SANCTUARY
GO
YOU'VE MADE A FIRST STEP POINT END THE JOURNEY NOW
GO.
EVEN AT THE END I'M LEFT TO WONDER WHY WHY DID HE CHANGE HIS MIND? I CAN'T SAY
HE'S ALMOST AS MUCH OF A MYSTERY NOW
AS WHEN I FIRST LET HIM CAPTURE ME

UP HERE
WE WERE BEGINNING TO GET CONCERNED, NESSA
HE HAD YOU FOR QUITE A WHILE. I THOUGHT WE MIGHT HAVE TO INTERVENE
LUCKY YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO
LUCKY FOR YOU
SO DID IT WORK? DID YOU GET HIM TO JOIN US?
RIGHT NOW?
NO
RIGHT NOW I'M NOT ENTIRELY SURE WHAT TO MAKE OF HIM
THIS MIGHT END UP JUST BEING ANOTHER STORY THEY TELL ABOUT HIM
BUT I THINK MAYBE THIS ONE WILL HAVE A DIFFERENT ENDING

UP HERE
WE WERE BEGINNING TO GET CONCERNED NESSA
HE HAD YOU FOR QUITE A WHILE THOUGHT WE MIGHT HAVE TO INTERVENE
LUCKY YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO
LUCKY FOR YOU
SO DID IT WORK? DID YOU GET HIM TO JOIN US?
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Thus Far in Scion

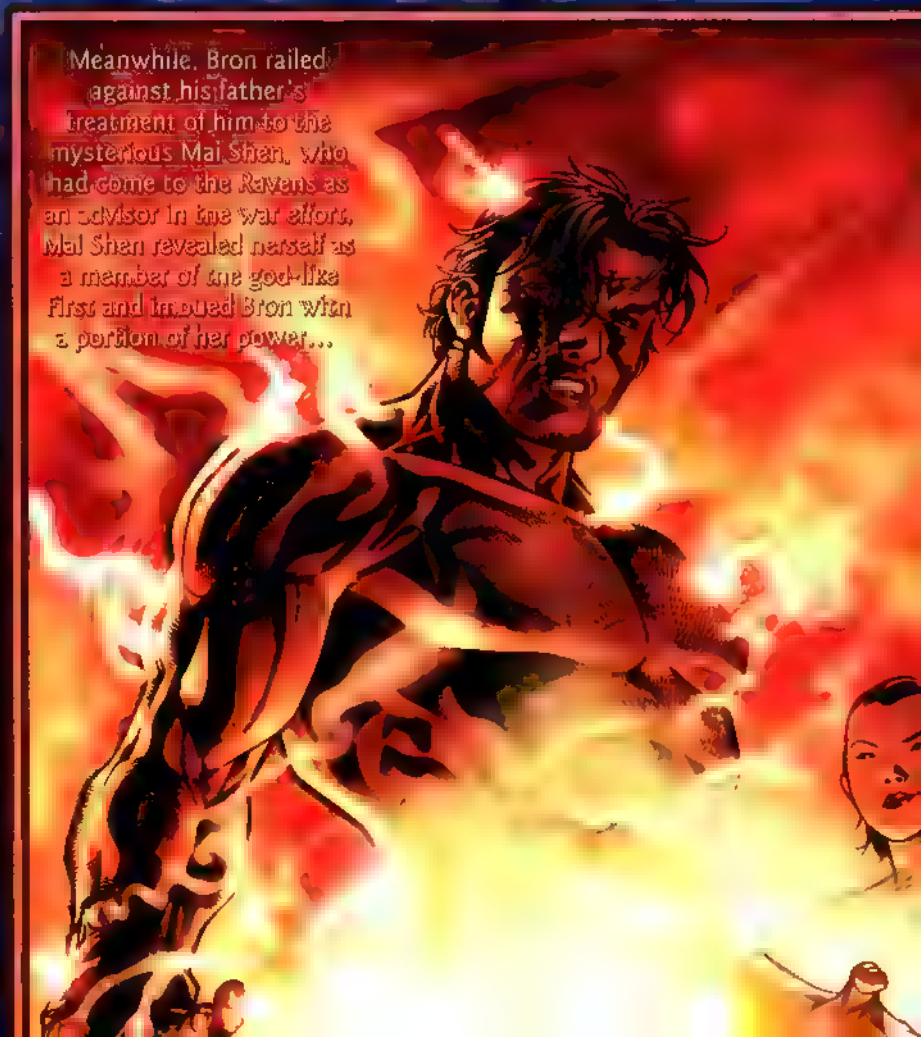
It started with a mysterious sigil fed to war. Prince Ethan of the West-ruling Raven Dynasty [illegible] with a mark granting [illegible] power, leading to the accidental scarring of Prince Bron of the East-ruling Raven Dynasty during ritual combat.

Ethan [illegible] himself to the Raven [illegible] was succeeded from his imprisonment by a woman named Ashleigh who wanted Ethan to join the Underground cause of freedom for the genetically engineered Lesser Races. Ethan declined her offer and set off for home as war loomed.

[illegible] the battle [illegible], ultimately [illegible] heirons, [illegible] Ethan's eldest brother and heir to the throne, Artor, was brutally slain by Bron. Vowing vengeance against Bron, Ethan returned to Eastern lands. Accompanied by his friend Skink, Ethan snuck into the Raven capital city intending to gain entrance to the Raven Keep.

Within the Keep the rift between Bron and his father, King Viktor, grew wider as Bron again was admonished for his temper. Bron then warned Ashleigh — his sister — of the consequences of opposing him.

Afterward, the king asked for Ashleigh's loyalty if he chose to break the order of succession and place her on the throne rather than Bron. Despite her loyalty to the Underground, Ashleigh agreed.


Meanwhile, Bron railed against his father's treatment of him to the mysterious Mai Shen, who had come to the Ravens as an advisor in the war effort. Mai Shen revealed herself as a member of the god-like First and imbued Bron with a portion of her power...

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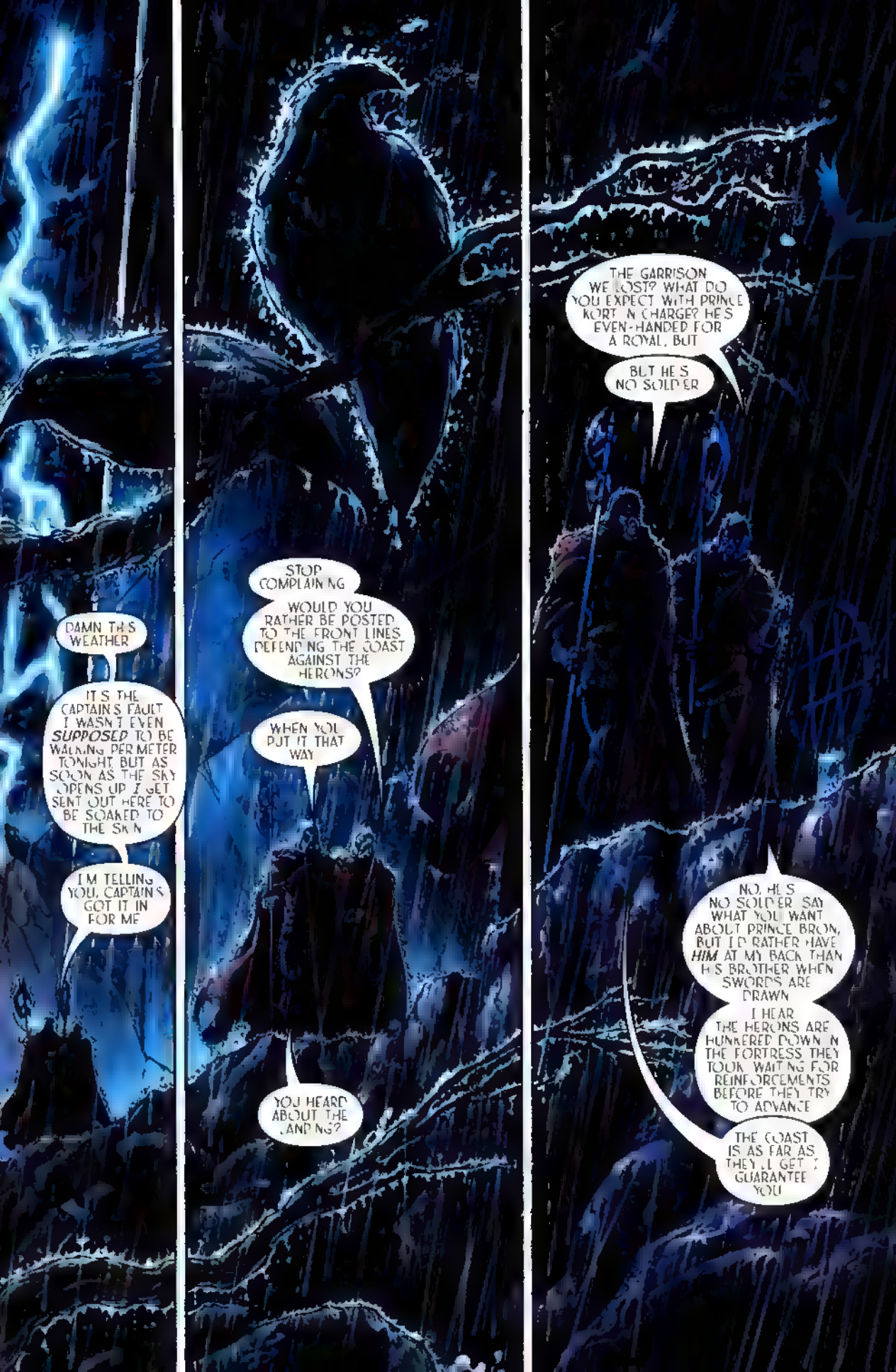

DAMN THIS WEATHER
IT'S THE CAPTAIN'S FAULT I WASN'T EVEN *SUPPOSED* TO BE WALKING PERIMETER TONIGHT, BUT AS SOON AS THE SKY OPENS UP I GET SENT OUT HERE TO BE SOAKED TO THE SKIN
I'M TELLING YOU, CAPTAIN'S GOT IT IN FOR ME
STOP COMPLAINING
WOULD YOU RATHER BE POSTED TO THE FRONT LINES DEFENDING THE COAST AGAINST THE HERONS?
WHEN YOU PUT IT THAT WAY
YOU HEARD ABOUT THE LANDING?
THE GARRISON WE LOST? WHAT DO YOU EXPECT WITH PRINCE KORT IN CHARGE? HE'S EVEN-HANDED FOR A ROYAL, BUT
BUT HE'S NO SOLDIER
NO, HE'S NO SOLDIER. SAY WHAT YOU WANT ABOUT PRINCE BRON, BUT I'D RATHER HAVE *HIM* AT MY BACK THAN HIS BROTHER WHEN SWORDS ARE DRAWN
I HEAR THE HERONS ARE HUNKERED DOWN IN THE FORTRESS. THEY TOOK. WAITING FOR REINFORCEMENTS BEFORE THEY TRY TO ADVANCE
THE COAST IS AS FAR AS THEY'LL GET. I GUARANTEE YOU

NO HERON WILL *EVER* SET FOOT IN RAVEN KEEP

WORRY ETHAN
THE GUARDS WILL BE BACK SOON
YOU WORRY TOO MUCH SKINK
WE'LL BE LONG GONE BY THE TIME THEY MAKE THEIR ROUNDS AGAIN
THEN LET'S HOPE THEY'RE NOT TOO OBSERVANT WHEN THEY COME BACK WE'LL BE GONE
BUT SO WILL THE DRAIN GATE

KRAKOOM

WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE MY SON?

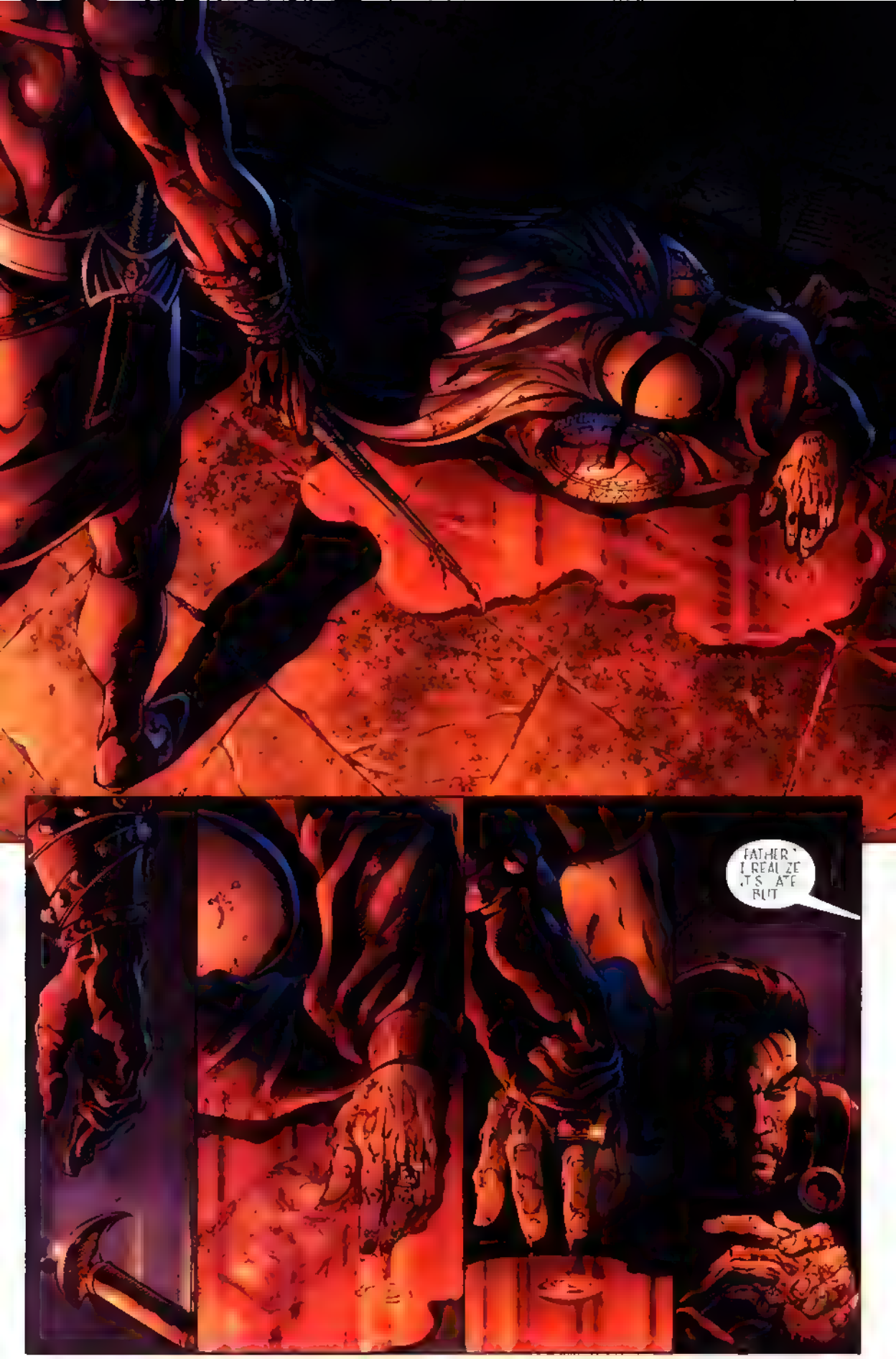
HELLO FATHER
IT'S NOT A FIT NIGHT BRON
NO IT ISN'T THE STORM RAGES
YOU HAVEN'T ANSWERED MY QUESTION WHAT BRINGS YOU TO MY STUDY?
USUALLY YOU CAN'T BE SEPARATED FROM MA_SHEN'S SIDE
I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT THE FUTURE
MY FUTURE
AH THE FUTURE
SUCH THOUGHTS MUST RUN IN OUR FAMILY I RETIRED TO MY STUDY TO PONDER THE VERY SAME THING
MY FUTURE
YOUR FUTURE

OUR DYNASTY'S FUTURE
I GROW CONCERNED FOR THIS KINGDOM OUR FAMILY HAS BUILT I WANT TO BE CERTAIN ALL WE HAVE ACHIEVED WILL CONTINUE WHEN I AM NO MORE
I'M SURE THESE ARE THOUGHTS YOU SHARE BRON
THE WEIGHT OF HISTORY IS A HEAVY THING FATHER
WE TRACE OUR LINEAGE IN A DIRECT LINE AN UNBROKEN SUCCESSION FROM PARENT TO ELDEST CHILD DATING BACK CENTURIES
IT'S ALWAYS BEEN SO
I HAVE KNOWN FROM THE TIME I WAS A CHILD THAT THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE THRONE FOR THE FUTURE OF THE RAVEN DYNASTY WOULD BE MINE
IT'S MY BIRTHRIGHT
I HELD THAT KNOWLEDGE CLOSE AND PREPARED MYSELF FOR IT EVERY DAY OF MY LIFE
AND YET YOU WOULD PLACE ASHLEIGH ON THE THRONE RATHER THAN ME

SO
THE WALLS TRULY DO HAVE EARS
WHY WOULD YOU DO THIS TO ME, FATHER?
BECAUSE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF TRUE POWER IS FAR DIFFERENT THAN THE SIMPLE EXERCISE OF AUTHORITY
THE THRONE BELONGS TO THE FIRST BORN
I WILL, AM I?
YOU CAN'T MANAGE TO CONTROL YOURSELF
HOW DO YOU THINK YOU COULD EVER CONTROL AN ENTIRE EMPIRE?
YOU'RE NO MORE PREPARED TO LEAD THIS KINGDOM THAN IS THAT DAMN HOUND OF YOURS
AND YOU GIVE ME NO SIGN YOU EVER WILL BE
CRUELTY FOR IT'S OWN SAKE AND FITS OF TEMPER DON'T BEFIT A MONARCH
IF TRADITION DEMANDS I PLACE MY KINGDOM IN THE HANDS OF A PETULANT CHILD THEN TRADITION BE DAMNED
I WON'T ALLOW THE MERE TIMING OF YOUR SISTER'S BIRTH TO PREVENT THE FITTEST RULER FROM FOLLOWING ME TO THE RAVEN THRONE
I'M SORRY, FATHER

BUT I CAN'T LET THAT HAPPEN
WAUKK
AAGH!
YOU WOULD TRULY DO THIS?
YOU LEAVE ME NO CHOICE
I SHOULD HAVE HAD YOU SMOTHERED IN YOUR CRADLE
YES YOU SHOULD HAVE

WHUK K
SPLUK K
SPLUT
SPLUTCH


FATHER, I REALIZE IT'S LATE BUT

BRON?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE? WHAT HAPPENED TO
FATHER?
I WAS YOU
YOU DID THIS!
DID I, SISTER?

OR WAS IT SOMEONE ELSE CLOSE TO THE KING WHO COMMITTED THIS HEINOUS ACT?
SOMEONE WITH AN OBVIOUS MOTIVE
WHAT
HAVE YOU BECOME?
I'VE BECOME KING
BUT AT SUCH A BITTER PRICE MY FATHER MURDERED AND THE CRIME PERPETRATED BY MY OWN SISTER
SHOCKING TO THINK HER MISGUIDED LOYALTY TO THE UNDERGROUND LED HER TO SLAY HER OWN FATHER IN AN ATTEMPT TO TAKE POWER
AND IF I HADN'T BEEN ABLE TO OVERCOME HER THE DEATHS OF HER BROTHERS WERE SURELY NEXT
I'LL BLAME MYSELF, OF COURSE I'LL CARRY THE BURDEN OF GUILT FOR NOT RECOGNIZING THE VIPER IN OUR MIDST UNTIL TOO LATE
SUCH A TRAGEDY
WHEN I ASCEND TO THE RAVEN THRONE, MY FIRST DUTIES WILL BE TO ATTEND TO MY FATHER'S FUNERAL
AND MY SISTER'S EXECUTION
YOU'RE MAD!
YOU ACTUALLY BELIEVE YOU CAN GET AWAY WITH THIS

WE ALREADY HAVE
YOU'VE NO HOPE OF STOPPING WHAT'S BEEN SET IN MOTION
YOU'RE AT THE HEART OF THIS, MAI SHEN AREN'T YOU? WHO AND WHATEVER YOU REALLY ARE
MY BROTHER NEEDS NO LESSONS IN TREACHERY, BUT MY FATHER'S BLOOD STAINS YOUR HANDS JUST AS SURELY AS BRONZE
I'LL SEE YOU DEAD, WITCH!
YOU'VE HAD THE ONLY WARNING YOU'LL GET
I TOLD YOU

YOU HAVE NO IDEA WHO YOU'RE DEALING WITH
AAAH!
NNNFFF

WHEN WILL I BE ABLE TO DO THAT?
YOU ALREADY CAN THAT AND MORE
I'VE GIVEN YOU THE POWER, ALL YOU NEED DO IS LEARN TO HARNESS IT
AND I'M A VERY GOOD TEACHER
I ALWAYS INTENDED TO SHIFT THE BLAME TO ASHTIGH HER WALKING IN MADE IT THAT MUCH EASIER
I'LL SUMMON THE GUARDS AND HAVE HER TAKEN TO THE DUNGEONS
WHAT OF YOUR BROTHER?
WILL HE PRESENT ANY DIFFICULTIES?
KORT'S NEVER BEEN TERRIFIED OF EVER HE'LL BELIEVE WHATEVER I TELL HIM
HE'S ALWAYS BEEN TERRIFIED SOMETHING WOULD HAPPEN TO ME HE'S NEVER WANTED THE THRONE HIMSELF
KORT WILL BE A BOON IN ALL THIS
SEND HIM HERE BUT TELL HIM NOTHING I WANT HIM TO HEAR OF HIS SISTER'S TREACHERY FROM HIS DEAR BROTHER'S LIPS NO
IN FACT SEND HIM TO THE THRONE ROOM
WHERE ELSE WOULD THE KING BE?

BRONZE
ARE YOU HERE?
MA'SHEN SAID YOU NEEDED TO TALK TO ME AND
KRAKOOM
I'M HERE
WHAT
WHAT'S GOING ON? WHY ARE YOU SITTING ON THE THRONE?
IS EVERYTHING ALL RIGHT?

NO
EVERYTHING'S NOT ALL RIGHT NOR?
I'M SORRY TO HAVE DRAGGED YOU FROM YOUR BED, BROTHER I KNOW YOU'RE ONLY RECENTLY RETURNED FROM THE FIELD
I'M AFRAID I HAVE GRIM NEWS FOR YOU THERE'S BEEN A TRAGEDY
A TRAGEDY? WHAT--
FATHER'S DEAD
FATHER'S DEAD?
HOW? A HERON PLOT?
I WISH THAT IT WERE SO NO, THE DEED IS ALL THE MORE HORRIBLE BECAUSE OF WHO IS RESPONSIBLE
OUR SISTER
YOU'RE SAYING ASHLEIGH MURDERED FATHER?
THAT CAN'T BE THERE MUST BE A MISTAKE!
NO MISTAKE I CAME UPON HER IN FATHER'S STUDY
JUST AFTER SHE'D BEATEN HIM TO DEATH
IF I'D ARRIVED ONLY A MOMENT SOONER I MIGHT HAVE BEEN ABLE TO STOP HER
BUT WHY?!
WHY WOULD SHE DO IT?

THE UNDERGROUND
HER INVOLVEMENT WITH THEM SHOULD COME AS NO SURPRISE IT'S WHY SHE WAS CONSTANTLY ABSENT FROM THE KEEP
AND WHY SHE KILLED FATHER
I EXPECT *YOU* WERE HER NEXT TARGET THEN SHE WOULD HAVE FRAMED ME FOR BOTH MURDERS AND TAKEN THE THRONE FOR HERSELF
ASHLEIGH
YES *ASHLEIGH* ALL SO SHE COULD FURTHER THE INSANE CAUSE OF THOSE LESSER RACE VERMIN
AT LEAST SHE WAS FOUND OUT BEFORE ALL OF HER PLAN COULD COME TO FRUITION
I'M KING NOW AND THIS WON'T GO UNPUNISHED
ASHLEIGH IS ALREADY CONFINED WITHIN THE DUNGEON *HER* FATE IS A FOREGONE CONCLUSION
AS A *SHOW* OF RAVEN STRENGTH
YOU SAVED MY LIFE ON THE BATTLEFIELD OF POINT KORDAY NOW I NEED YOU AGAIN, KORT
TAKE A CONTINGENT OF OUR TROOPS, FIND THE SANCTUARY, AND RAZE IT TO THE GROUND
WILL YOU DO THIS FOR ME BROTHER?
BUT THE UNDERGROUND ITSELF MUST PAY THEIR SANCTUARY IS IN THE NORTH, SOMEWHERE NEAR THE RUINS TO WHICH WE TRACKED MY ESCAPED SLAVE
I WANT THE SANCTUARY *DESTROYED* AS PUNISHMENT
SKARKOUM
I AM YOUR SERVANT MY KING

SKWEE?
HSST
RRUMBL
YEEK
THIS IS FAMILIAR
AND THANKFULLY DESERTED, CONSIDERING THE DIN YOU JUST RAISED
Shoo
I NEVER THOUGHT I'D COME BACK HERE
ESPECIALLY WILLINGLY

GETTING INSIDE THE KEEP AND KNOWING WHERE WE ARE IS WELL AND GOOD, BUT WE NEED TO KNOW WHERE WE'RE *GOING*
WE HAVE ONLY A FEW HOURS BEFORE DAWN AND THIS PLACE IS TOO VAST FOR US TO WANDER UNTIL WE SIMPLY STUMBLE ACROSS BRON
I THINK *THAT'S* THE ONE THAT'S WHERE THEY HAD US
OR WORSE, UNTIL *HE* STUMBLES ACROSS *US*
BEFORE

ETHAN, WHAT ARE YOU DOING? YOU'LL GIVE US AWAY!
WE DON'T HAVE *TIME* FOR THIS!
WE *HAVE* TO

ASHLEIGH

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Ethan surrendered himself to the Ravens but was soon freed from his imprisonment by a woman named Ashleigh who wanted Ethan to join the Underground cause of freedom for the genetically engineered Lesser Races. Ethan declined her offer and set off for home as war loomed.

When the battle was met, first victory belonged to the Herons, but Ethan's oldest brother and heir to the throne, Artor, was brutally slain by Bron. Ethan vowed to have his revenge and returned to Eastern lands.

Meanwhile, the mysterious Mai Shen, who initially claimed to be a simple war advisor, revealed herself as a member of the god-like First and imbued Bron with a portion of her power.

Even as Ethan and his friend Skink snuck into the Raven Keep, Bron murdered his father King Viktor in order to take the throne for himself. Bron then framed Ashleigh – who is, in fact, his sister – for the crime and imprisoned her within the Raven dungeons, where she was found by Ethan...

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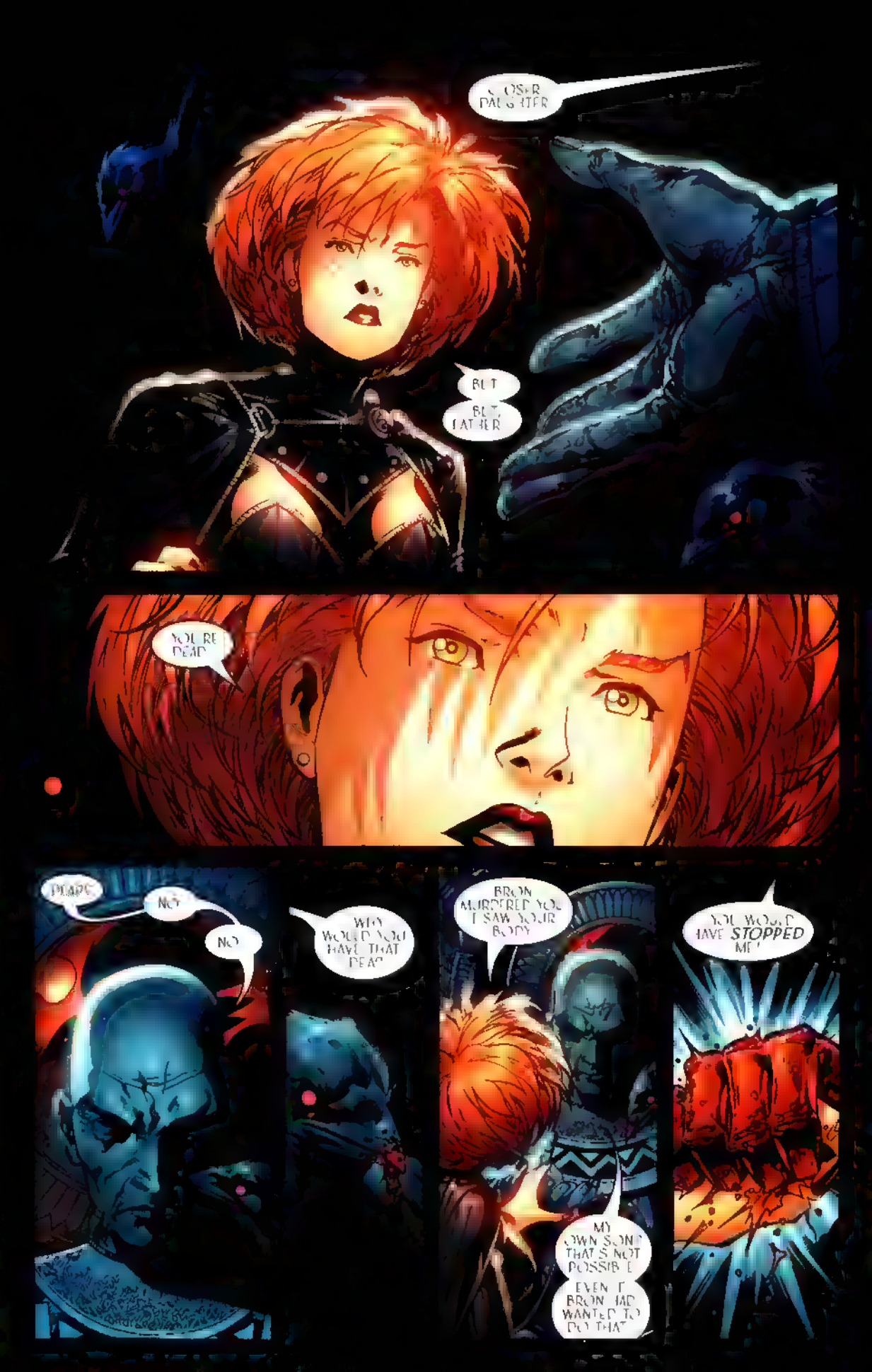
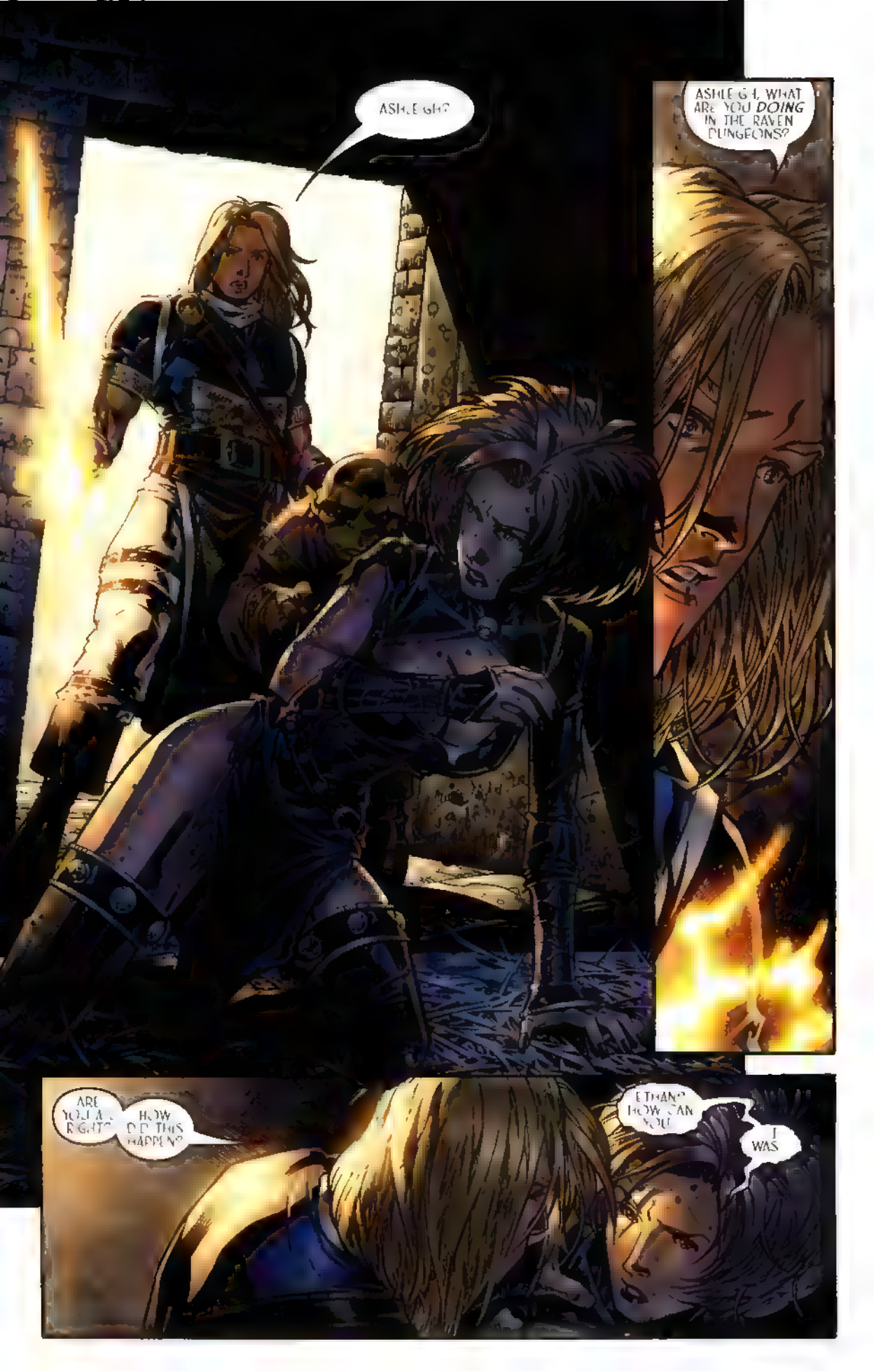
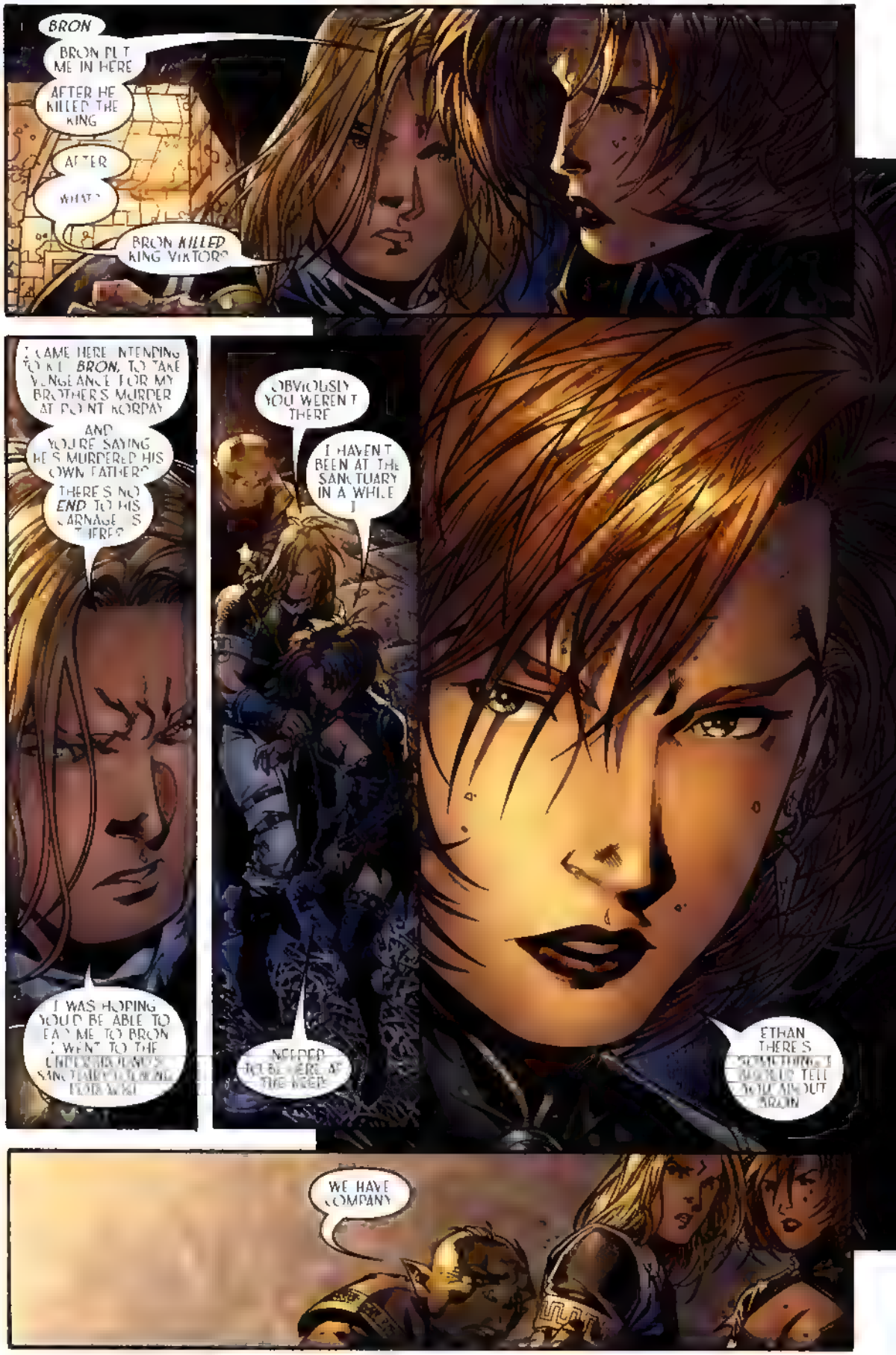
COME CLOSER, ASHLEIGH


CLOSER DAUGHTER
BUT
BUT FATHER
YOU'RE DEAD
PLEASE
NO
NO
WHY WOULD YOU HAVE THAT DEAD
BRON MURDERED YOU I SAW YOUR BODY
MY OWN SON? THAT'S NOT POSSIBLE
EVEN IF BRON HAD WANTED TO DO THAT
YOU WOULD HAVE STOPPED ME!

WHY DIDN'T YOU STOP ME, ASHLEIGH?!


ASHLEIGH?
ASHLEIGH, WHAT ARE YOU *DOING* IN THE RAVEN DUNGEONS?
ARE YOU A- RIGHT?
HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?
ETHAN? HOW CAN YOU-
I WAS

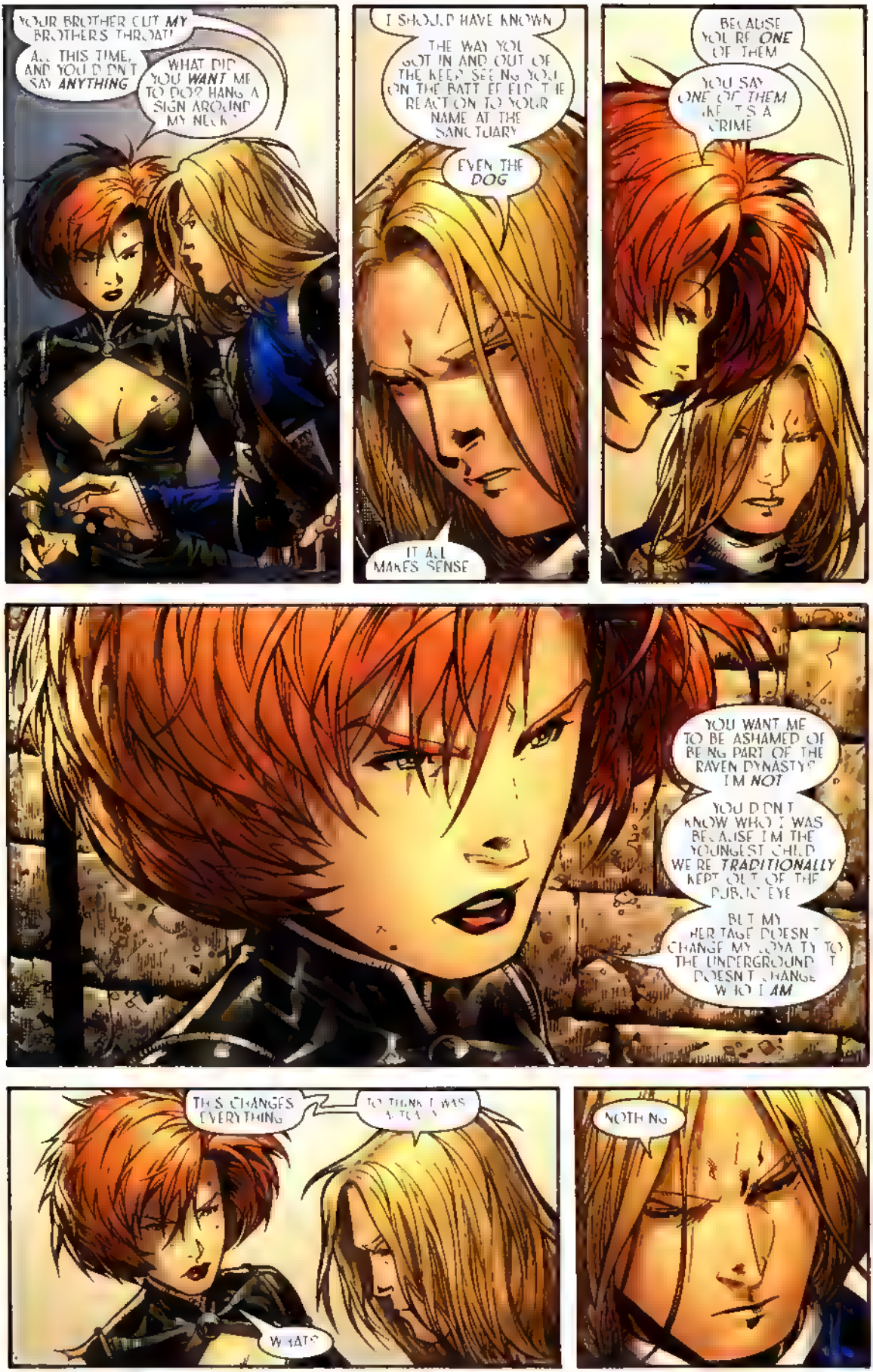

BRON
BRON PUT ME IN HERE
AFTER HE KILLED THE KING
AFTER
WHAT?
BRON KILLED KING VIKTOR?
I CAME HERE INTENDING TO KILL BRON, TO TAKE VENGEANCE FOR MY BROTHER'S MURDER AT POINT KORDAY
AND YOU'RE SAYING HE'S MURDERED HIS OWN FATHER?
THERE'S NO END TO HIS CARNAGE IS THERE?
I WAS HOPING YOU'D BE ABLE TO LEAD ME TO BRON I WENT TO THE
OBVIOUSLY YOU WEREN'T THERE
I HAVEN'T BEEN AT THE SANCTUARY IN A WHILE I
NEEDED TO BE HERE AT THE KEEP
ETHAN THERE'S
WE HAVE COMPANY

YOU AGAIN
YOU JUST VANISHED FROM MY JAIL BEFORE
YOU WON'T BE LEAVING THIS TIME!
WF!
SWANG

UFF!
SHOOM
WHAT'S THAT SWORD, BOY?
NEW HERON TECHNOLOGY?
WHHSH
SOMETHING LIKE THAT
KRUNK
GHHN!

THANKS
BUT I COULD HAVE HANDLED HIM MYSELF
YOU'RE WELCOME
AND I REALIZE YOU COULD'VE HANDLED HIM YOURSELF
SEEING AS YOU'RE APPARENTLY NEVER UNARMED THAT'S SOMETHING TO DO WITH THAT MARK ON YOUR ARM YOU WERE GOING ON ABOUT?
IT IS
I'M STILL LEARNING EXACTLY WHAT IT DOES, BUT THIS IS PART OF IT
SKINA ARE YOU OKAY?
I WILL BE
SEEMS LIKE SOMEONE'S ALWAYS KNOCKING YOU OUT OF THE WAY TO GET TO ME
SORRY
IT'S ALL RIGHT, ETHAN IT'S PRETTY HARD TO REALLY HURT ME
COME ON WE NEED TO BE GONE BEFORE MORE GUARDS SHOW UP
MAYBE YOU CAN STILL LEAD ME TO BRON IF YOU KNOW WHERE HE IS
PROBABLY THE THRONE ROOM BUT
ETHAN WAIT

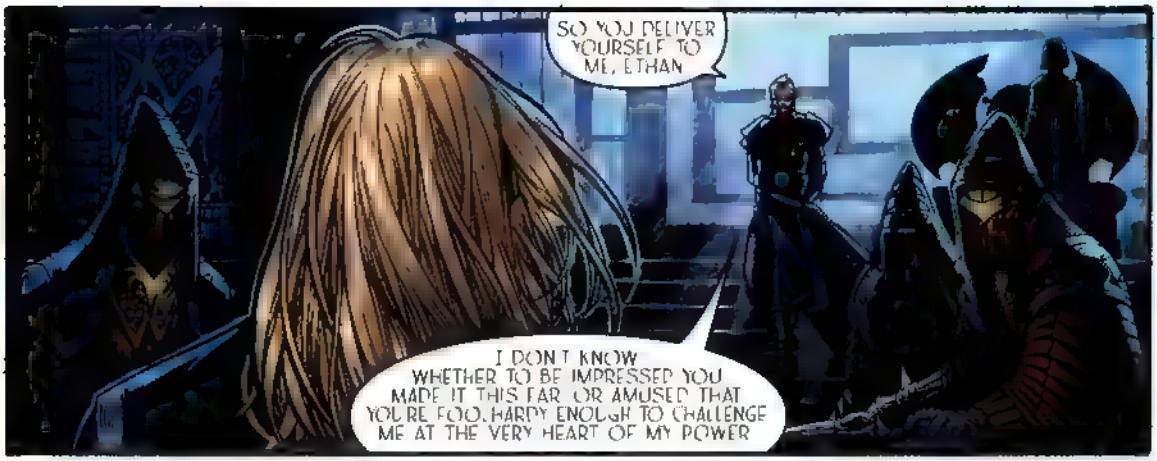
BRON IS MY BROTHER
YOUR BROTHER
BRON IS YOUR BROTHER

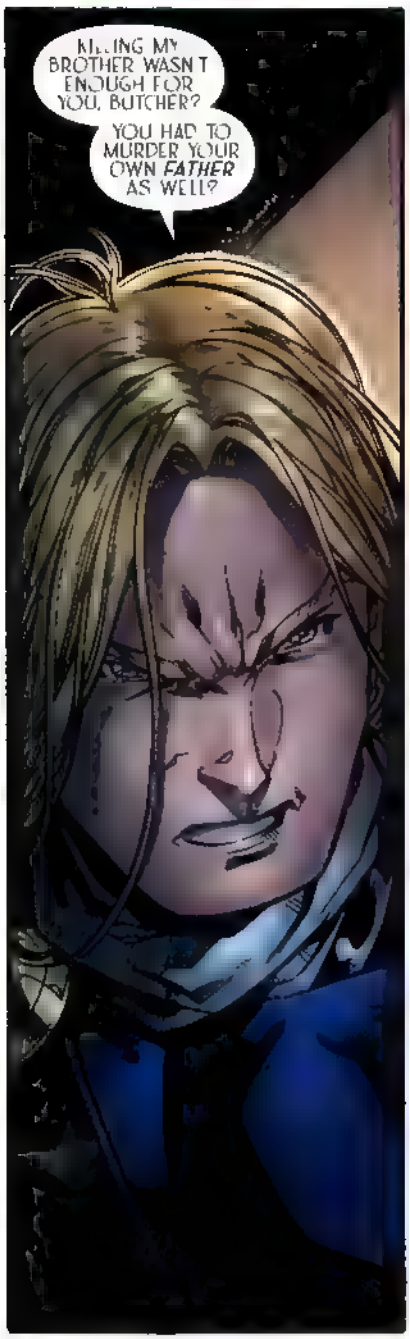

YOUR BROTHER CUT MY BROTHER'S THROAT!
ALL THIS TIME, AND YOU DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING
WHAT DID YOU WANT ME TO DO? HANG A SIGN AROUND MY NECK?
I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN
THE WAY YOU GOT IN AND OUT OF THE KEEP SEEING YOU ON THE BATTLEFIELD THE REACTION TO YOUR NAME AT THE SANCTUARY
EVEN THE DOG
IT ALL MAKES SENSE
BECAUSE YOU'RE ONE OF THEM
YOU SAY ONE OF THEM LIKE IT'S A CRIME
YOU WANT ME TO BE ASHAMED OF BEING PART OF THE RAVEN DYNASTY? I'M NOT
YOU DON'T KNOW WHO I WAS BECAUSE I'M THE YOUNGEST CHILD WE'RE TRADITIONALLY KEPT OUT OF THE PUBLIC EYE
BUT MY HERITAGE DOESN'T CHANGE MY LOYALTY TO THE UNDERGROUND. IT DOESN'T CHANGE WHO I AM
THIS CHANGES EVERYTHING
TO THINK I WAS ATTRACTED
WHAT?
NOTHING

I CAME HERE TO KILL BRON. THAT'S WHAT I INTEND TO DO.
WITH OR WITHOUT YOUR HELP.
BUT
I
WELL?
THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT
ETHAN?
ARE YOU SURE THIS IS WHAT YOU WANT TO DO?
THIS IS WHAT I *SWORE* I WOULD DO.
IT'S ST... THE EARLY MORNING
BRON'S GOING TO BE *DEAD* BEFORE MOST OF THE KEEP IS EVEN AWAKE

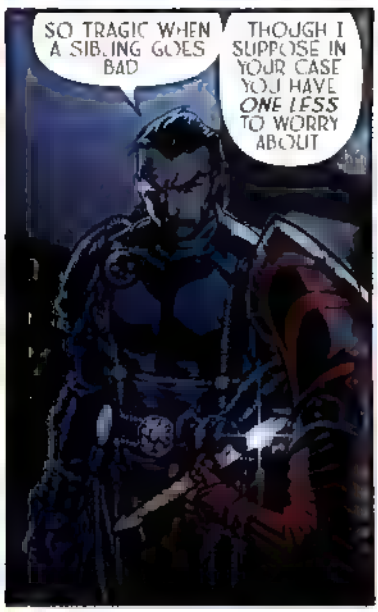
FIRST THE CORONATION
SO THERE'S NO DOUBT IN THE PEOPLE'S MINDS AS TO WHO THEIR MONARCH IS
THEN FATHER'S FUNERAL WITH THE PROPER POMP AND OUTPOURING OF GRIEF, SO THE PEOPLE SEE I'M COMPASSIONATE
AND FINALLY ASHLEIGH'S EXECUTION, SO THEY'RE REMINDED I CAN BE UNFORGIVING WHEN NECESSARY
MAGSHEN HAS MY BROTHER LEFT TO UNDERTAKE THE TASK I LAID BEFORE HIM?
KORT'S ALREADY GONE
EVERYTHING WE'VE SET IN MOTION IS COMING TO
BRONI

I'VE COME FOR YOU!
I'VE COME FOR VENGEANCE!
THE HERON PRINCE?
HERE?
TAKE HIM!
NO!
LEAVE HIM TO ME


SO YOU DELIVER YOURSELF TO ME, ETHAN
I DON'T KNOW WHETHER TO BE IMPRESSED YOU MADE IT THIS FAR OR AMUSED THAT YOU'RE FOOLHARDY ENOUGH TO CHALLENGE ME AT THE VERY HEART OF MY POWER


KILLING MY BROTHER WASN'T ENOUGH FOR YOU, BUTCHER?
YOU HAD TO MURDER YOUR OWN *FATHER* AS WELL?

MY FATHER?
I'M AFRAID YOU'RE MISINFORMED. THE TRUTH, AS TERRIBLE AS IT MAY BE, IS THAT MY *SISTER* WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE KING'S DEATH


SO TRAGIC WHEN A SIBLING GOES BAD
THOUGH I SUPPOSE IN YOUR CASE YOU HAVE *ONE LESS* TO WORRY ABOUT

ALMOST AS TRAGIC AS THE DEATH OF AN HEIR TO THE THRONE

YES, WELL
I'M *HER* NO LONGER

THE THRONE AND ALL ITS RESPONSIBILITIES HAVE PASSED TO ME
FITTING, DON'T YOU THINK, FOR ME TO START MY REIGN BY KILLING *YOU*?
THAT'S IRONIC
I THOUGHT I'D *END* YOUR REIGN BY KILLING *YOU*
TRY

KRAKOA

SHOOM
THE MARK YOU BEAR CREATES YOUR BLADE?
INTRIGUING
SKRAYOOM
SKRIP
I HOPE YOU FIND IT SO WHEN YOU'RE SPITTED UPON IT!
YOU NEVER KNOW
NF!
I MIGHT SURPRISE YOU!

I SWORE ON MY BROTHER'S GRAVE I'D AVENGE HIM!
SHING
GH!
CHANG
GHF!
GAAH!
KRANG
I'LL DANCE ON YOURS!
SURPRISE

WNF?!
WHOOM
HOW DID
HOW DID YOU DO THAT?
YOU THINK YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO'S BEEN TOUCHED WITH POWER, BOY?!
DO YOU?!
hkk

Oh YES
I THINK YOU ARE SURPRISED
SKUH
SKINK?
I THINK I MIGHT BE
hhhhh
ETHAN!

HAVE SOMEONE CLEAN UP THIS MESS

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Thus Far in Scion

What started with a mysterious sigil led to war. Prince Ethan of the West-ruling Heron Dynasty was graced with a mark granting him power, leading to the accidental stabbing of Prince Bron of the East-ruling Raven Dynasty during ritual combat.

Ethan surrendered himself to the Ravens but was soon freed from his imprisonment by a woman named Ashleigh who wanted Ethan to join the Underground cause of freedom for the genetically engineered Lesser Races. Ethan declined her offer and set off for home as war loomed.

When the battle was met, first victory belonged to the Herons, but Ethan's oldest brother and heir to the throne, Artor, was brutally slain by Bron. Ethan vowed to have his revenge and returned to Eastern lands.

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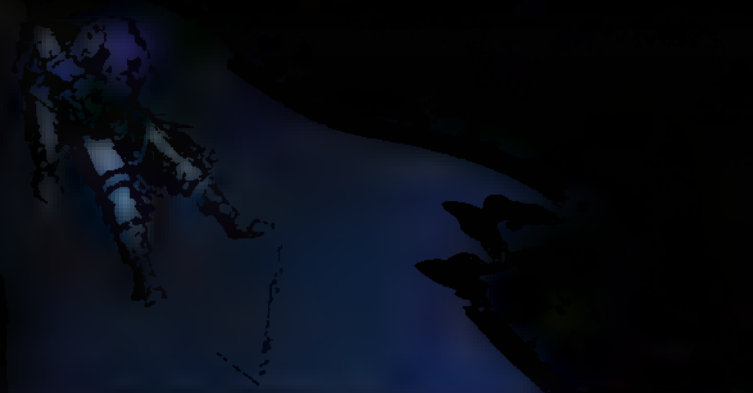
Ethan freed Ashleigh from the Raven dungeons, but turned his back on her when she admitted her true heritage – she is, in fact, Bron's sister. Ethan engaged Bron in combat, but was run through by the new Raven monarch and left for dead...



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I CAN'T BREAK MYSELF OF THINKING HE'LL BE THERE
I'LL HEAR A FOOTFALL BEHIND ME, OR SEE A SHADOW ON THE WALL, AND I'LL TURN AND EXPECT TO SEE ARTOR THERE SMILING AT ME
BUT HE NEVER IS
I'M NOT SURE WHICH IS WORSE, DANE, HAVING BURIED OUR ELDEST SON
OR NOT KNOWING IF WE'LL HAVE TO DO THE SAME FOR OUR YOUNGEST
ETHAN'S ABSENCE WEIGHS UPON ME AS WELL, MARIELLA
BUT NO AMOUNT OF DISCUSSION COULD CONVINCE HIM HE WAS SIMPLY A CONVENIENT TRIGGER AND NOT THE *CAUSE* OF THIS CONFLICT
WE'LL BURY FAR TOO MANY OF THIS KINGDOM'S SONS AND DAUGHTERS BEFORE OUR WAR WITH THE RAVENS IS DONE
I PRAY ETHAN'S NOT AMONG THEM
VIKTOR HAD LONG STOKED THE FIRES OF WAR. NOW THAT HE'S FANNED THOSE FLAMES TO LIFE

I WONDER IF ANY OF US WILL BE UNTOUCHED BY THEM
FATHER!
FATHER, THERE'S NEWS!
WHAT NEWS HAS IT, YOUR BROTHER?
NO WORD FROM ...THAN
BUT OUR NECROMANTS ON THE EASTERN SHORE HAVE CONTACTED US ... IT'S KING VIATOR
VIATOR? WHAT'S HE DONE NOW?
DIED

DEAD? HOW?
WHAT'S HAPPENED?
THE DETAILS AREN'T COMPLETELY CLEAR BUT WE KNOW THE KING'S DEAD
THE YOUNGEST CHILD IS RUMORED RESPONSIBLE
REGICIDE
VIKTOR FORGES THIS WAR BUT I WOULD NOT HAVE WISHED THIS FATE UPON HIM
THE THRONE BELONGS TO THE ELDEST NOW? TO BRON?
AYE FATHER
THE MAN WHO MURDERED ARTOR NOW SITS UPON THE RAVEN THRONE
THIS BODES ILL FOR THE WAR
HOW SO? WON'T THIS THROW THE RAVENS INTO A DISARRAY THAT WILL BE TO OUR ADVANTAGE?
I KNEW VIKTOR COULD PREDICT HIM
AT BEST BRON IS A WILD CARD AT WORST HE COULD BE A MADMAN
AND ETHAN WENT TO THE EAST VOWING TO SLAY HIM
THIS GIVES ME NO COMFORT KNOWING YLENA IS IN THE EAST AS WELL BUT AT LEAST SHE'S SECURE BEHIND THE WALLS OF THE FORTRESS SHE AND HER TROOPS TOOK
WITH ETHAN
WE HAVE NO WAY OF KNOWING IF HE'S EVEN ALIVE

I WANT THIS PIECE OF MEAT REMOVED FROM MY THRONE HALL
AND HAVE THAT HUMPBACKED FREAK EXECUTED AS WELL
COME ALONG
I WON'T LET THIS END LIKE
YOU WEREN'T SATISFIED WITH FATHER

YOU HAD TO MURDER *HIM* AS WELL?!

UF!
MY FIRST INSTINCT WAS TO ESCAPE
AND AVENGE FATHER ANOTHER DAY
BUT I'M GLAD I THOUGHT BETTER OF IT
FOR EVERYTHING YOU'VE DONE BROTHER
YOU DESERVE TO DIE!
AHHH!
DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHAT I CAN DO?!
ANY?!

EYAAH!
I'D PLANNED ON WAITING FOR A VERY PUBLIC EXECUTION FOR YOU, DEAR SISTER
I THOUGHT THE PEOPLE NEEDED CLOSURE
THEY NEEDED TO SEE THE COLD-BLOODED MURDERER OF THEIR BELOVED KING PUT TO THE DEATH SHE SO *RICHLY* DESERVES
BUT PATIENCE WAS NEVER ONE OF MY VIRTUES
I'LL SEE YOU BURN
SO WHY DON'T WE PUT AN *END* TO THIS HERE AND NOW?

YOU KNOW, I DON'T THINK FATHER ACTUALLY BELIEVED I'D *DO* IT RIGHT UP TO THE END
I COULD HAVE KILLED HIM WITH A TOUCH. BUT THEN I COULDN'T HAVE BLAMED YOU AS READILY, COULD I?
FRANKLY, IT WAS MORE SATISFYING HEARING HIS BRITTLE OLD BONES BREAK ANYWAY
BUT YOU ASHLEIGH *YOU* BELIEVE I'LL DO IT
DO YOU KNOW WHAT MY REIGN'S GOING TO BE REMEMBERED FOR? WINNING THIS WAR FOR ONE. I'M GOING TO *CRUSH* THE HERONS
AND ONCE THAT'S DONE, I'LL TURN MY *FULL* ATTENTION TO YOUR PRECIOUS UNDERGROUND
I'LL HUNT DOWN EVERY LAST ONE OF THEM, AND THEIR CORPSES WILL DECORATE THE STREET CORNERS
THAT'S WHAT I'LL BE REMEMBERED FOR, DEAR SISTER
TAKE THAT KNOWLEDGE WITH YOU TO YOUR *GRAVE*

FATHER
NO!
I KILLED YOU!
HOW CAN YOU BE ALIVE?!
I DON'T UNDERSTAND HOW YOU DID THAT TO ASHLEIGH
I DON'T UNDERSTAND HOW I'M ALIVE
GHNH!
BUT I PROMISE YOU WON'T BE FOR MUCH LONGER

WE WOULD HAVE PREFERRED TO FIND A WAY TO *USE* YOU SIGIL BEARER
BUT REMOVING YOU FROM THE FIELD CAN SERVE OUR PURPOSES JUST AS -
SNAP
I CAN'T ALLOW THAT TO HAPPEN
I WON'T HAVE MY PLANS UPSET BY YOUR INTERFERENCE
HNEH
I WOULD HAVE *DIED* IF NOT FOR YOU.
AND I THOUGHT YOU *WERE* DEAD
SO DO I
ETHAN! WE NEED TO GET OUT OF THE KEEP!
NOT YET
I'M NOT TOO WEAK TO *FINISH* THIS

KILL THEM
KILL THEM ALL!
SURRENDER YOURSELVES
WE'LL MAKE IT QUICK
ETHAN THIS WAY
I CAME HERE TO AVENGE MY BROTHER
NOT NOW YOU'RE NOT DONE WE'RE GETTING OUT OF HERE!
HOW? THERE ISN'T A WAY OUT!
YES THERE IS
YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS

SPWUSH
SHHH!
DAMN THEM
SEND TROOPERS INTO THE CITY TO BRING THEM BACK ALIVE OR DEAD. I DON'T CARE WHICH AT THIS POINT
THEY WON'T GET FAR

NO ONE WILL DARE TAKE THEM IN
KOFF
KOFF KOFF
YOU WERE SERIOUS
NOT ME
KOFF
NO TIME TO REST WE HAVE TO GET MOVING
MOVING WHERE?
WE'RE FUGITIVES IN THE MIDDLE OF THE RAVEN CAPITAL
I THINK WE'RE A LITTLE TOO CONSPICUOUS TO BLEND IN WITH THE CROWD
I KNOW PEOPLE

WE HAVE TO GET CLEAR OF THE CITY AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE
ARE YOU GOING TO BE ABLE TO MAKE IT?
RIGHT BEHIND YOU!
GOOD
YOU'RE DOING PRETTY WELL FOR SOMEONE WHO'S SUPPOSED TO BE DEAD
I... KEEP UP JUST
UFF!
FUMP
SORRY!
HEY!
JUST TELL ME WHERE WE'RE GOING!
THERE
THERE?

RUDD!
WE NEED YOUR HELP
ASH, FIGHT
I WASN'T EXPECTING YOU
TO WHAT DO I OWE THE SURPRISE?
I DON'T HAVE MUCH TIME TO EXPLAIN, RUDD, BUT BRON'S MURDERED MY FATHER AND TAKEN THE THRONE
HE'S BLAMING ME FOR THE CRIME HE WOULD'VE HAD ME EXECUTED IF I HADN'T ESCAPED
I KNOW YOUR BROTHER'S A BAD SEED, BUT THIS
I DAMN MYSELF FOR NOT SEEING IT IN TIME
RUDD, WE NEED TO BE OUT OF THE CITY AND ON OUR WAY TO THE SANCTUARY
YOUR FRIEND CAN BE TRUSTED?
HE'S EVEN MORE OF A FUGITIVE THAN I AM
ETHAN, THIS IS RUDD. THE UNDERGROUND HAS SUPPORTERS OTHER THAN ME
THAT'S A RECOGNIZABLE FACE YOU WEAR, PRINCE
YOU'RE LUCKY YOU FELL IN WITH ASH, FIGHT
DEET

WHERE DOES IT LEAD?
IT'LL TAKE YOU OUT TO THE BARRENS BEYOND THE CITY WALLS
WHIRRRRRRRRRR
MORE THAN A FEW LESSER RACE SLAVES HAVE USED IT TO LEAVE THEIR CHAINS BEHIND
THERE ARE LANTERNS AND FOOD WAITING DOWN THERE
THANK YOU RUPP
ANYTHING FOR YOU ASH EIGH YOU KNOW THAT
GET YOURSELVES MOVING RIGHT AWAY AND BE CAREFUL
YOUR BROTHERS GOING TO TEAR APART THIS CITY LOOKING FOR YOU
YOU BE CAREFUL TOO
BRONS HANDS DON'T NEED ANY MORE BLOOD ON THEM
IT'S NOT MY BLOOD HE WANTS
THANK YOU FOR HELPING US
YOU THANK ME BY TAKING CARE OF ASH EIGH

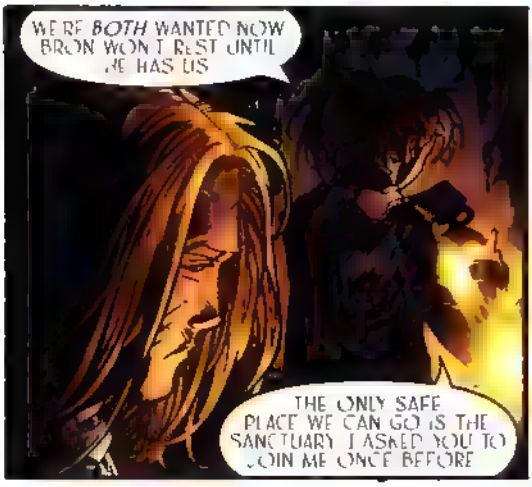
WATCH YOUR STEP SINK. THE STAIRS ARE A LITTLE SLICK
THIS IS HOW YOU USUALLY GET OUT OF THE CITY?
ONE OF THE WAYS
HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE US TO GET BEYOND THE WALLS?
WHIRRRRRRRRR
ONLY A FEW HOURS. THE TUNNEL RUNS IN A FAIRLY STRAIGHT LINE
BEFORE WE GO, I NEED TO ASK YOU ABOUT THE POWER YOUR BROTHER HAD
DO YOU KNOW HOW HE--
WHOA WHAT RE YOU DOING?!

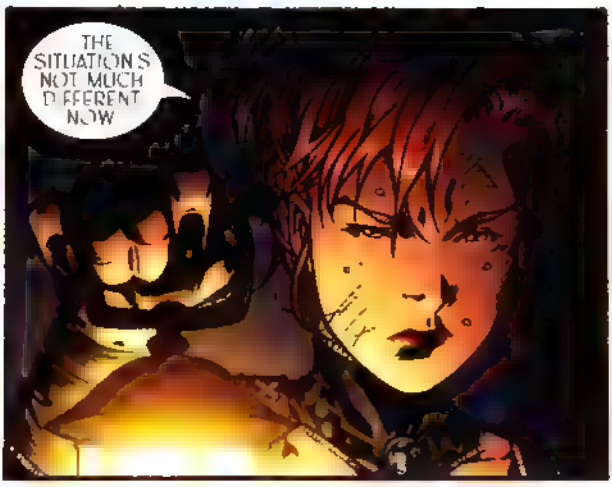
HARDLY EVEN A SCAR
MY BROTHER RAN YOU THROUGH YOU SHOULD BE DEAD BUT YOU HARDLY EVEN HAVE A SCAR
HOW IS THAT POSSIBLE?
I DON'T KNOW THAT'S THE TRUTH I DON'T
OBVIOUSLY IT HAS SOMETHING TO DO WITH THIS SIGIL ON MY ARM, LIKE WHEN BRON CUT MY FACE AND I HEALED
BUT I DON'T THINK I WAS DEAD I THINK I WAS DYING AND IT SAVED ME
CAN YOU BE KILLED?
I'M SURE IF THE WOUND WAS BAD ENOUGH BUT
WHAT'S BAD ENOUGH?
I HOPE YOU NEVER HAVE TO FIND OUT
YOU HEARD WHAT RUDD SAID WE SHOULDN'T WASTE TIME

WAIT
BACK IN THE KEEP IN THE THRONE HALL WHAT MADE YOU COME BACK?
I'M NOT SURE
TO SEE IF YOU WERE STILL ALIVE
TO SEE IF BRON WAS DEAD
I COULDN'T BRING MYSELF TO GO WITH YOU WHEN YOU ASKED ME
BUT I COULDN'T BRING MYSELF TO JUST WALK AWAY EITHER

I'M GLAD YOU'RE NOT DEAD

THANKS


WE'RE *BOTH* WANTED NOW BRON WON'T REST UNTIL HE HAS US
THE ONLY SAFE PLACE WE CAN GO IS THE SANCTUARY I ASKED YOU TO JOIN ME ONCE BEFORE


THE SITUATION'S NOT MUCH DIFFERENT NOW

THE ONLY REASON I CAME HERE AGAIN WAS TO AVENGE ARTOR'S DEATH BY KILLING YOUR BROTHER
AFTER THAT I INTENDED TO RETURN TO THE WEST TO MY FAMILY, AND HELP WITH THE WAR
THAT'S NOT GOING TO HAPPEN, IS IT? YOU'LL NEVER GET CLOSE ENOUGH TO BRON, NOT NOW EVEN IF YOU COULD
NO, I DON'T KNOW WHERE HIS POWER CAME FROM THOUGH I'M SURE MAI SHEN IS INVOLVED
NEITHER OF US IS READY TO TAKE HIM ON UNTIL WE UNDERSTAND WHAT HE'S BECOME
I'M GOING NORTH TO THE SANCTUARY. DO WHATEVER YOU WANT AFTERWARD. BUT I COULD USE YOUR HELP GETTING THERE
AND WHETHER I'M PART OF THE RAVEN DYNASTY OR NOT YOU NEED MY HELP OR YOU'RE NEVER GOING TO GET OUT OF THE CITY
MUCH LESS ACROSS THE GREAT SEA AND HOME AGAIN SO
ARE YOU COMING WITH ME OR NOT?
SA NAR, IS THIS OKAY WITH YOU?
I GO WHERE YOU GO, ETHAN
I TRUTHFULLY DON'T THINK WE HAVE MUCH CHOICE
ALL RIGHT, AS FAR AS THE SANCTUARY
BUT THEN I GO HOME

WELL THEN, LOOKS LIKE WE'RE STUCK WITH EACH OTHER
FOR A WHILE
RIGHT
FOR A WHILE

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Axis Par In Scion

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Ethan freed Ashleigh from the Raven dungeons, but learned her true heritage – she is, in fact, Bron's sister. Ethan met Bron in combat and was apparently slain, but rose again when his wound was healed by his sigil. Ethan, Skink and Ashleigh made a narrow escape from the Raven Keep and headed north toward the Underground's hidden sanctuary.

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YOU WOULD HAVE ENJOYED IT
IT WAS A ROUSING SUCCESS AS FUNERALS GO
SUCH A GENUINE OUTPOURING OF GRIEF FOR THE SLAIN MONARCH I EVEN SHED A FEW TEARS MYSELF
JUST SO THE PEOPLE COULD SEE THE HUMAN SIDE OF THEIR NEW KING
KING BRON THEY'RE ALREADY GETTING USED TO THAT
NO ONE SUSPECTS THE TRUTH IN CASE YOU WERE WONDERING MAISHEN KNOWS. OBVIOUSLY SHE HELPED TURN ME INTO WHAT I AM TODAY
YOU NEVER HAD AN INKLING OF WHAT SHE WAS DID YOU?
AND THEN THERE'S ASHLEIGH SHE MADE IT SO EASY TO PLACE THE BLAME FOR THE MURDER UPON HER SHOULDERS
BUT SHE'S MANAGED TO SLIP THROUGH MY FINGERS
SHE'S OUT THERE NOW WITH THAT DAMNED HERON PRINCE WITH HER
I ACTUALLY KILLED HIM BUT HE WON'T STAY DEAD
THEY MANAGED TO GET OUT OF THE CITY SOMEHOW PROBABLY HER FRIENDS IN THE UNDERGROUND AGAIN
BUT I PROMISE YOU I WILL FIND THEM AND WHEN I DO

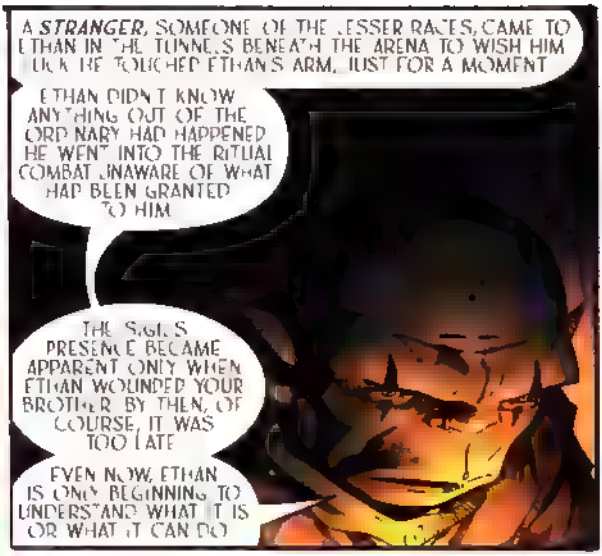
I'LL BURY HER RIGHT HERE NEXT TO YOU FATHER
I STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY YOU CHOSE *HER*
SHE NEVER OBEYED YOU. SHE CARED MORE FOR THOSE FILTHY ANIMALS IN THE UNDERGROUND THAN SHE DID FOR HER OWN DYNASTY
AND YET YOU CHOSE HER OVER ME
YOU'VE PAID FOR YOUR CHOICE, FATHER. I SWEAR TO YOU
SO WILL SHE

TELL ME ABOUT HIM

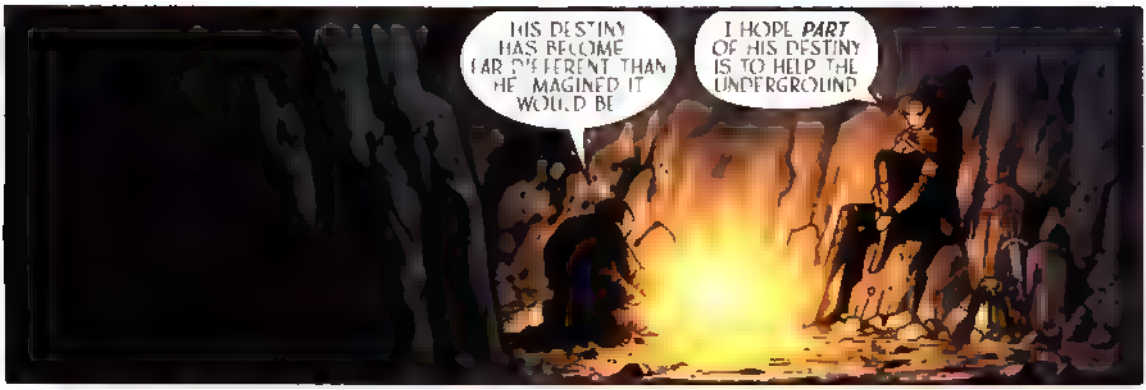
ABOUT ETHAN? WHAT DO YOU WANT TO KNOW?
JUST ABOUT *HIM* WHY HE SEEMS DIFFERENT FROM MOST PEOPLE
WHY HE TREATS YOU MORE LIKE A FRIEND THAN A SERVANT, FOR INSTANCE
THE LESSER RACES HERE IN THE EAST *CAN'T* BE ANYTHING MORE THAN SLAVES
SOMETHING LIKE YOUR FRIENDSHIP WOULD NEVER BE TOLERATED, EVEN IF IT WERE POSSIBLE
IT'S SIMPLY *ACCEPTED* TO TREAT THE LESSER RACES LIKE LIVESTOCK
OR WORSE
SEEING SUCH CRUELTY IS ONE OF THE REASONS I JOINED THE UNDERGROUND AND I *THINK* ETHAN FEELS AS I DO
I'VE KNOWN ETHAN SINCE HE WAS BORN
I'M AN ORPHAN
MY EARLIEST MEMORIES ARE OF LIVING ON THE STREETS OF THE HERON CAPITAL BEGGING FOR COINS, EATING SCRAPS TO SURVIVE
I WAS STILL A CHILD WHEN ETHAN'S FATHER KING DANE, CAME UPON ME. OTHER CHILDREN WERE TAUNTING ME BECAUSE OF MY DEFORMITY
EVEN CHILDREN OF THE LESSER RACES. BUT HE TOOK PITY ON ME. HE TOOK ME *IN*
I GREW UP IN THE PALACE KITCHENS AND EVENTUALLY BECAME COURT JESTER. I SUPPOSE THE *IRONY* WAS AMUSING
ANYONE WOULD MISTAKE THIS FOR THE FACE OF A COMEDIAN
I GREW UP AS A SURROGATE PARENT TO THE ROYAL CHILDREN, LOOKING AFTER THEM WHEN DUTY DEMANDED THEIR PARENTS' ATTENTION
ETHAN'S BROTHERS AND SISTER WERE KIND TO ME, BUT AS THEY GREW UP I COULD SEE THAT IN THEIR EYES I WAS REALLY NOTHING MORE THAN A SERVANT
ETHAN HIMSELF WAS DIFFERENT. HE'S PRINCE OF A VAST KINGDOM, YET HE'S ALWAYS TREATED ME AS AN EQUAL
HIS HEART IS THE TRUEST I'VE EVER KNOWN

WHY DOES HE HATE ME?
HATE YOU? NO, HE DOESN'T HATE YOU
THEN WHY DOES HE ACT THE WAY HE DOES TOWARD ME? I'VE NEVER DONE ANYTHING TO HURT HIM
WE'VE BEEN TRAVELLING TOGETHER NEARLY TWO DAYS AND HE'S HARDLY SAID A WORD TO ME
HE DOESN'T TALK TO YOU BECAUSE HE DOESN'T KNOW WHAT TO *SAY* TO YOU
EVEN AS A CHILD ETHAN NEVER HAD TROUBLE CHOOSING BETWEEN RIGHT AND WRONG BUT YOU'VE ASKED HIM TO CHOOSE BETWEEN TWO *RIGHTS*
ETHAN THINKS HE'S FAILED YOU BECAUSE HE HAD TO REFUSE YOUR PLEA TO HELP THE UNDERGROUND
HE'S STILL TORN BETWEEN YOUR CAUSE AND HIS LOYALTY TO HIS FAMILY, AND HE'S UPSET WITH HIMSELF THAT HE HASN'T FOUND A WAY TO RECONCILE THE TWO
HE'S SAID NONE OF THIS TO ME, BUT I KNOW HIM WELL ENOUGH TO KNOW IT'S TRUE
AND, OF COURSE, HE LIKES YOU
LIKES ME?
HE BARELY *TOLERATES* ME. MAYBE YOU DON'T KNOW HIM AS WELL AS YOU THINK YOU DO
WHAT ABOUT THE MARK ON HIS ARM?
IT BROUGHT ETHAN BACK TO LIFE, OR CLOSE TO IT, HE CAN CREATE THAT SWORD BECAUSE OF IT AND WHO KNOWS WHAT ELSE?
WHAT CAN YOU TELL ME ABOUT *THAT*?

I CAN TELL YOU I DON'T THINK IT BROUGHT HIM BACK TO LIFE. THAT MUCH, AT LEAST, SEEMS BEYOND ITS POWER
IN A WAY, THE SIGIL *STARTED* ALL THIS. IT WAS AT THE TOURNAMENT ISLE
I IMAGINE YOU WERE EVEN THERE
JUST BEFORE HE FOUGHT BRON


A *STRANGER*, SOMEONE OF THE LESSER RACES, CAME TO ETHAN IN THE TUNNELS BENEATH THE ARENA TO WISH HIM LUCK. HE TOUCHED ETHAN'S ARM. JUST FOR A MOMENT.
ETHAN DIDN'T KNOW ANYTHING OUT OF THE ORDINARY HAD HAPPENED. HE WENT INTO THE RITUAL COMBAT UNAWARE OF WHAT HAD BEEN GRANTED TO HIM.
THE SIGIL'S PRESENCE BECAME APPARENT ONLY WHEN ETHAN WOUNDED YOUR BROTHER. BY THEN, OF COURSE, IT WAS TOO LATE.
EVEN NOW, ETHAN IS ONLY BEGINNING TO UNDERSTAND WHAT IT IS OR WHAT IT CAN DO.

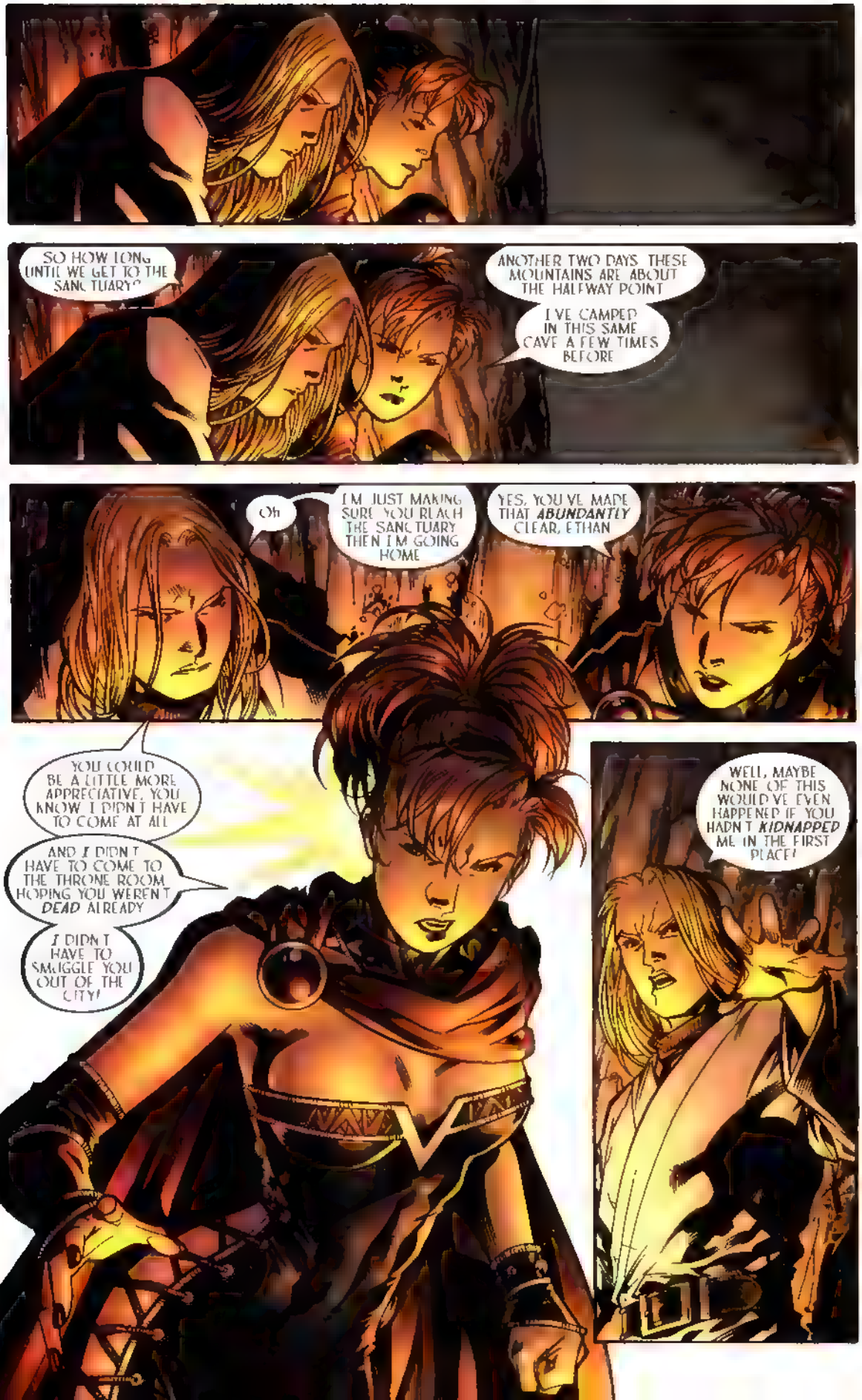
BUT HE *ALREADY* UNDERSTANDS IT'S CHANGED HIS LIFE.


HIS DESTINY HAS BECOME FAR DIFFERENT THAN HE IMAGINED IT WOULD BE.
I HOPE *PART* OF HIS DESTINY IS TO HELP THE UNDERGROUND.

WE NEED SOMEONE LIKE HIM IF WE'RE TO HAVE ANY HOPE OF CHANGING THE LOT OF THE LESSER RACES ON *EITHER* SIDE OF THE GREAT SEA.

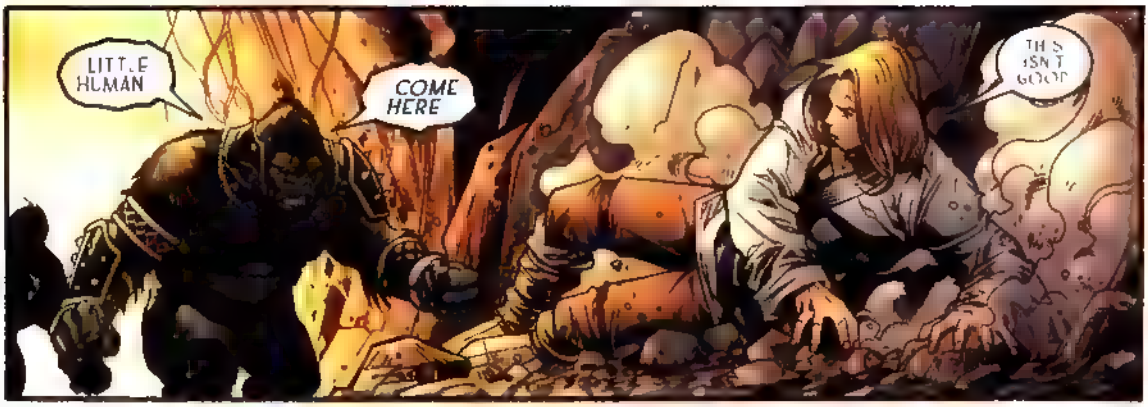
THERE'S NOT MUCH OUT THERE.

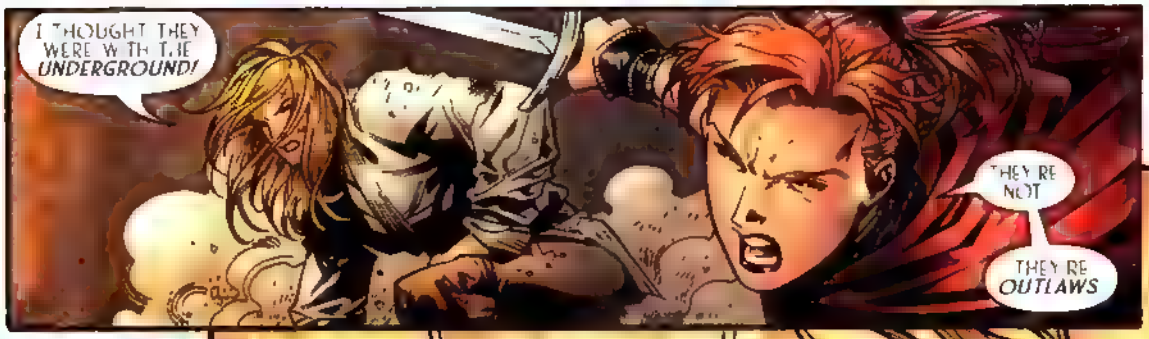
THIS IS ALL I COULD FIND
IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME
I'LL GET YOU TWO TALK
THANK YOU FOR GETTING THE FIREWOOD
SURE


SO HOW LONG UNTIL WE GET TO THE SANCTUARY?
ANOTHER TWO DAYS. THESE MOUNTAINS ARE ABOUT THE HALFWAY POINT.
I'VE CAMPED IN THIS SAME CAVE A FEW TIMES BEFORE.
OH.
I'M JUST MAKING SURE YOU REACH THE SANCTUARY. THEN I'M GOING HOME.
YES, YOU'VE MADE THAT *ABUNDANTLY* CLEAR, ETHAN.
YOU COULD BE A LITTLE MORE APPRECIATIVE, YOU KNOW. I DIDN'T HAVE TO COME AT ALL.
AND I DIDN'T HAVE TO COME TO THE THRONE ROOM HOPING YOU WEREN'T *DEAD* ALREADY.
I DIDN'T HAVE TO SMUGGLE YOU OUT OF THE CITY!
WELL, MAYBE NONE OF THIS WOULD'VE EVEN HAPPENED IF YOU HADN'T *KIDNAPPED* ME IN THE FIRST PLACE!

MAYBE MY BROTHER WOULDN'T BE *DEAD* IF YOU HAD LET ME SERVE MY YEAR IN THE RAVEN DUNGEONS!
IF YOU BELIEVE YOU'D HAVE *SURVIVED* A YEAR IN THE DUNGEONS, YOU'RE MORE NAIVE THAN I THOUGHT!
YOU ACT LIKE YOU'RE THE *ONLY* ONE WHO'S BEEN WRONGED!
DID YOU FORGET BRON HAS PUT A PRICE ON *MY* HEAD AS WELL? I'M A FUGITIVE IN MY OWN KINGDOM.
I DON'T THINK YOU WANT TO START COMPARING *LOSSES* WITH ME, ETHAN. I NEVER EVEN KNEW MY MOTHER.
AND NOW MY FATHER IS GONE.
JUST LEAVE ME ALONE.
ASHLEIGH, I DIDN'T MEAN
I'M SORRY. I
DAMN IT.
ETHAN?
FORGET IT, SANK. I WASN'T
NEVER MIND.
COULD YOU SAY MORE OF THE WRONG THINGS IF YOU *TRIED*, ETHAN?
IDIOT.

Oh
ASHLEIGH SAID THE UNDERGROUND MIGHT SEND SOMEONE OUT TO MEET US
HANG ON, I'LL LET HER KNOW YOU'VE ARRIVED
ASHLEIGH THERE'S -
HRRR
RRARR
WHUMP
GNF!


LITTLE HUMAN
COME HERE
THIS ISN'T GOOD


I THOUGHT THEY WERE WITH THE UNDERGROUND!
THEY'RE NOT
THEY'RE OUTLAWS

ETHAN, LET ME HELP I CAN
STAY PUT SKINK

WE'LL HANDLE THIS

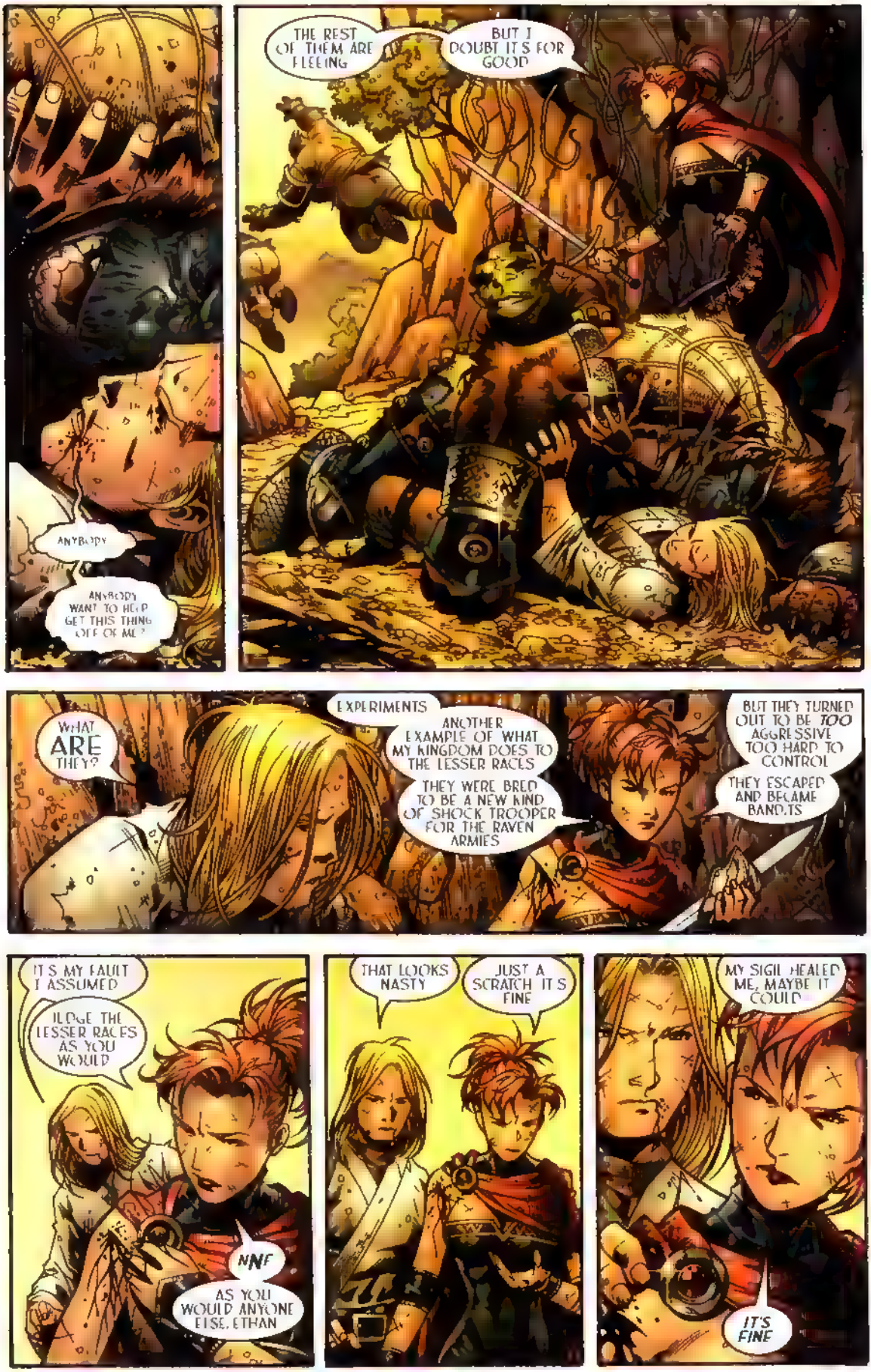
WORD SPREADS QUICKLY, PRINCESS. I'D ALMOST CONSIDER TURNING YOU IN
BUT I'VE NEVER TASTED *ROYAL* BLOOD
SHANG
THEY'RE NOT HERE TO TAKE *PRISONERS*, ETHAN!
HRR
I'M *GETTING* THAT IMPRESSION!

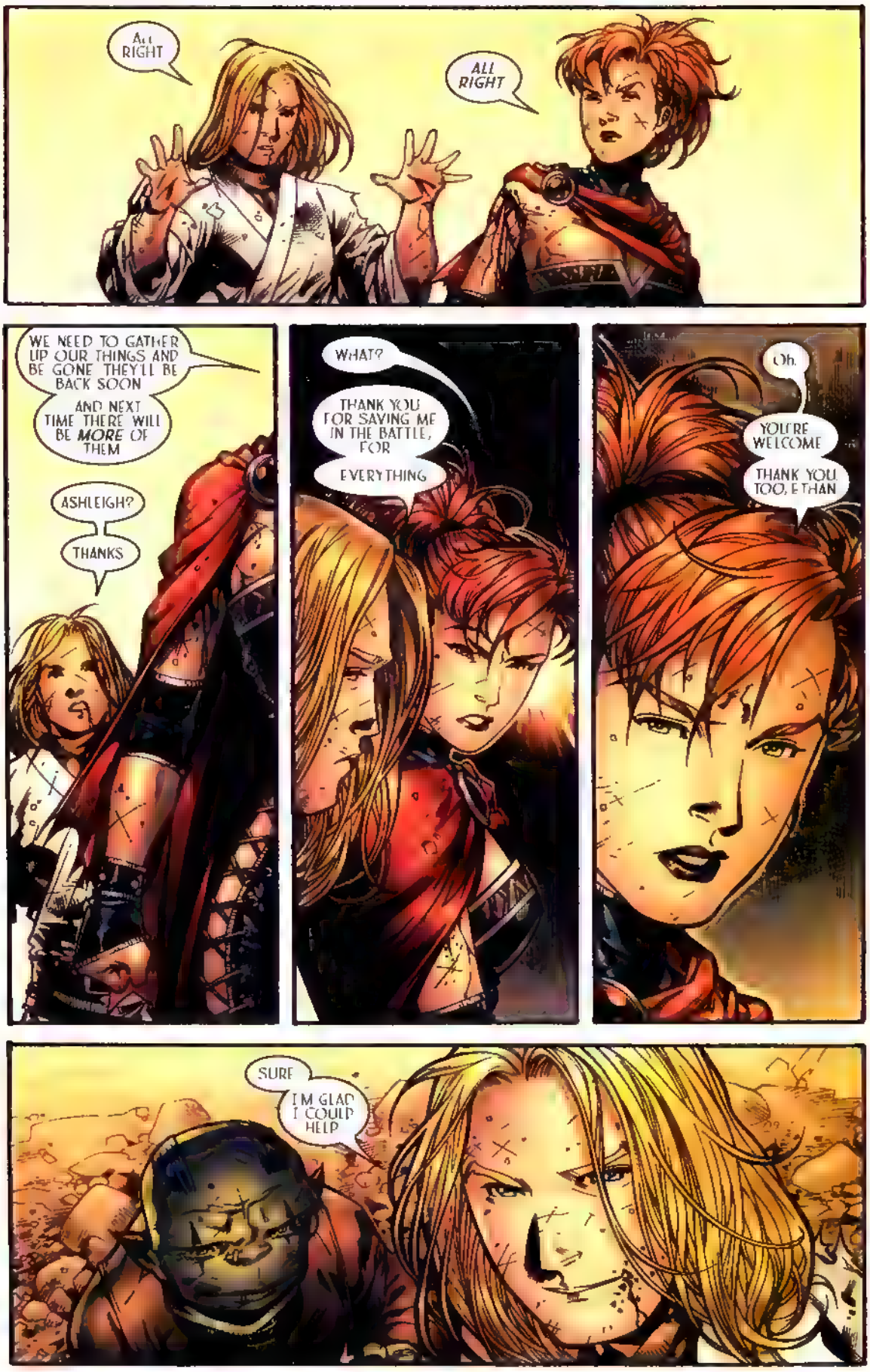
SLAWK!
HROWL!
HRH!
THEY MOVE TOO FAST! I CAN'T -
GHN!
WHUMP

YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE COME HERE
THESE MOUNTAINS BELONG TO US. NOW YOUR *LIVES* BELONG TO—
NNNFF
GAH!
FMMP
NFF!
AGH!
ETHAN, THEY'RE GOING TO *OVERWHELM* US LIKE THIS!

NO, THEY WON'T
YOUR KIND *MADE* US!
WIFF!

YOU SOUGHT TO CREATE UNSTOPPABLE WARRIORS!
LOOK AT *ME*, HUMAN!
IS *THIS* WHAT YOU WANTED?! *IS THIS*
sssss


ANYBODY
ANYBODY WANT TO HELP GET THIS THING OFF OF ME?
THE REST OF THEM ARE FLEEING
BUT I DOUBT IT'S FOR GOOD
WHAT ARE THEY?
EXPERIMENTS
ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF WHAT MY KINGDOM DOES TO THE LESSER RACES
THEY WERE BRED TO BE A NEW KIND OF SHOCK TROOPER FOR THE RAVEN ARMIES
BUT THEY TURNED OUT TO BE TOO AGGRESSIVE TOO HARD TO CONTROL
THEY ESCAPED AND BECAME BANDITS
IT'S MY FAULT I ASSUMED
I LOGE THE LESSER RACES AS YOU WOULD
NNF
AS YOU WOULD ANYONE ELSE, ETHAN
THAT LOOKS NASTY
JUST A SCRATCH IT'S FINE
MY SIGIL HEALED ME, MAYBE IT COULD
IT'S FINE


ALL RIGHT
ALL RIGHT
WE NEED TO GATHER UP OUR THINGS AND BE GONE THEY'LL BE BACK SOON
AND NEXT TIME THERE WILL BE MORE OF THEM
ASHLEIGH?
THANKS
WHAT?
THANK YOU FOR SAVING ME IN THE BATTLE, FOR
EVERYTHING
Oh.
YOU'RE WELCOME
THANK YOU TOO, ETHAN
SURE
I'M GLAD I COULD HELP

WE'RE CLOSE AREN'T WE?
JUST ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THIS THICKET
THIS SEEMS REMOTE NOW BUT THERE WAS A TIME WHEN THIS WAS A MAGNIFICENT CITY
THE FIRST AND ONLY FREE CITY OF THE LESSER RACES IN THE EAST
THEN MY ANCESTORS TOOK AWAY ANY RIGHTS THE LESSER RACES HAD AND FORCED THE CITY TO BE ABANDONED IT'S BEEN A RUIN EVER SINCE
YOU CAN STILL SEE GLIMPSES OF WHAT IT ONCE WAS I HOPE IT CAN BE RESTORED TO ITS FULL GLORY ONE DAY
SHAME YOU WON'T BE STAYING
WELL, IT'S NOT AS IF I
NO

THEY'R DEAD THEY'RE ALL DEAD
WHO DID
THERE
EXETER

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Troy PETERI Dave LANPHEAR LETTERERS

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Thus Far in Scion

What started with a mysterious sigil led to war. Prince Ethan of the West-ruling Heron Dynasty was graced with a mark granting him power, leading to the accidental scarring of Prince Bron of the East-ruling Raven Dynasty during ritual combat.

Ethan surrendered himself to the Ravens but was soon freed from his imprisonment by a woman named Ashleigh who wanted Ethan to join the Underground cause of freedom for the genetically engineered Lesser Races. Ethan declined her offer and set off for home as war loomed.

When the battle was met, first victory belonged to the Herons, but Ethan's oldest brother and heir to the throne, Artor, was brutally slain by Bron. Ethan vowed to have his revenge and returned to Eastern lands.

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Following a confrontation with Bron, Ethan escaped the Raven Keep accompanied by Ashleigh and his friend Skink. Surviving an encounter with a band of savage Lesser Race outlaws, the group arrived at the Underground's hidden Sanctuary, only to find it destroyed. Amid the destruction, Ethan spied the feared bounty hunter Exeter…

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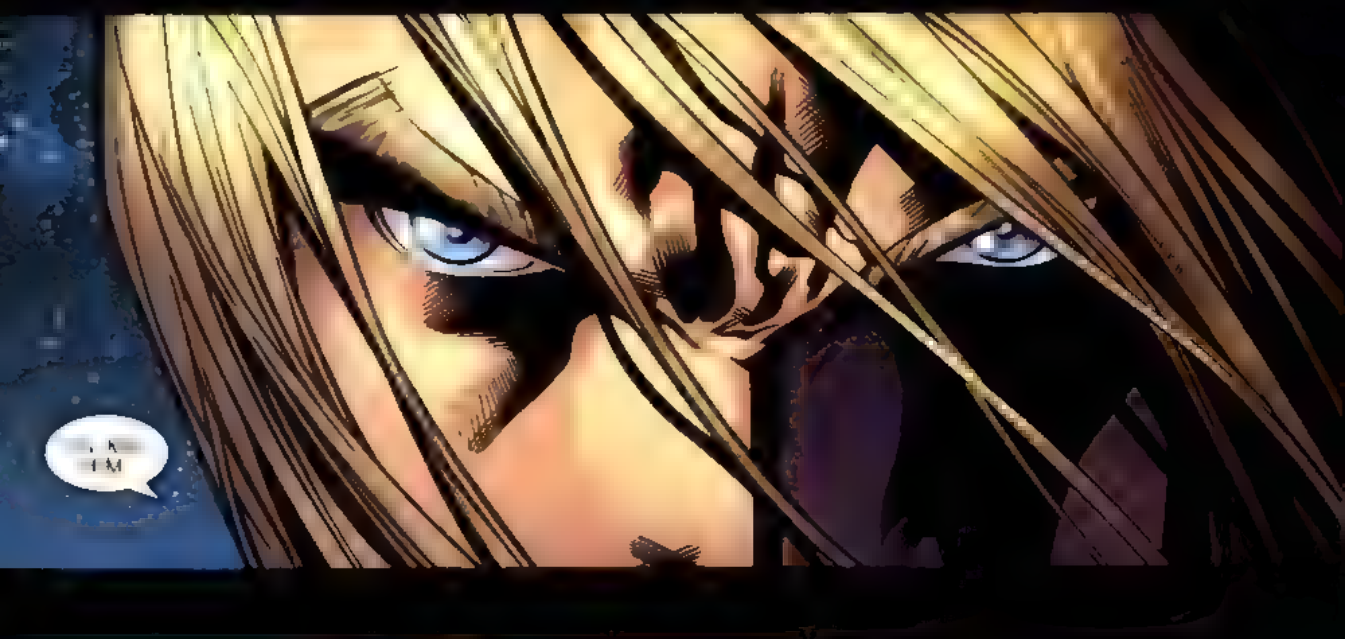

EXETER!

THIS IS HOW YOU REPAY MY MERCY OF SPARING YOUR LIFE?!
CLANG

DESERVES
FOR WHAT
HE'S DONE
ASH: EIGH
WAIT
I DON'T
THINK THIS
IS AS IT
APPEARS
SLING
BUTCHER!
CLANG

STOPPED THIS
LAST TIME!
AGAIN!

WASN'T ME
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
THIS WAS NOT MY DOING
I DIDN'T SAY I WASN'T INVOLVED I SAID IT WASN'T MY DOING
THIS SHOULD BE THE EXPLANATION YOU SHOULD NEED

MY DYNASTY DID THIS

"SOMETIMES, THOUGH, IT'S THE SMALLEST WHO ARE BRAVEST WHO ARE WILLING TO TAKE A CHANCE.
"I ACTUALLY BELIEVED I COULD MAKE A HOME HERE.

ALL I COULD.
NOT NEARLY ENOUGH.
CHILDREN,
THE LAME,
THE SWORD.

"THE RAVEN NUMBERS WERE OVERWHELMING. EVERY FALLEN TROOPER REPLACED BY TWO MORE. IT WAS CHAOS..."

I ASSUME? I WAS THE SIRE OF THIS SLAUGHTER
I AM SORRY
I JUDGED BY WHAT I SAW AND WHAT I EXPECTED OF YOU. I DREW A CONCLUSION YOU DIDN'T DESERVE
WHY SHOULD I BE WORTHY OF ANYTHING OTHERS?
I HAVE A GREAT DEAL OF HISTORY TO LIVE DOWN. NONE OF IT KIND
WHY *DID* YOU DO WHAT YOU DID? WHY HUNT YOUR OWN PEOPLE?
IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO SEE ANY VALUE IN OTHERS
WHEN YOU DESPISE WHAT YOU YOURSELF ARE
SHRIMP

BUT AFTER OUR LAST MEETING BEING ACCEPTED BY THE UNDERGROUND
AND THEN WHAT HAPPENED AFTER
I WANT TO MY PREVIOUS BEHIND ME
I'D LIKE TO WHAT I CAN TO HELP
CONSIDERING YOUR PAST IT'S GOING TO TAKE A GREAT DEAL FOR ANYONE TO TRUST YOU
MYSE
REALIZE
A
BATMAN
YOU'D PLANNED TO GO HOME AFTER WE REACHED THE SANCTUARY
I KNOW
SKUNK
HER

KORT CARRIED OUT THIS CARNAGE BUT I'M SURE BRON ORDERED IT AND AT LEAST PART OF IT WAS BECAUSE OF ME
BRON DID THIS TO CRIPPLE THE UNDERGROUND AND BECAUSE I'M PART OF IT
WE WILL REBUILD WHAT WE HAD THERE ARE OTHERS WHO BELIEVE
THIS ISN'T THE END OF THE UNDERGROUND
INTO THE KORINAR MOUNTAINS
A DOZEN OF US PLANNED TO DESTROY A GENETICS FACILITY MY DYNASTY WAS SECRETLY KEEPING OPERATIONAL

YOU'RE
THANK YOU FOR GOING THIS FAR ETHAN BUT KNOW WHERE YOUR TRUE LOYALTIES LIE
TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF
WITH
BUT IT'S THE LEAST I OWE THESE PEOPLE

IF YOU'LL HAVE ME
KNOW OF THE PLACE
I'D LIKE TO GO ALONE AS WELL
YOUR REPUTATION AMONG THE LESSER RACES DOESN'T MAKE ME ANXIOUS TO COUNT YOU AS AN ALLY EXETER
LET ME PROVE MYSELF PLEASE
BUT ONLY BECAUSE I CAN'T AFFORD TO REFUSE ANY HELP AT THIS POINT
I'LL BE WATCHING YOU
BURY THE DEAD BUT THEN WE NEED TO GET MOVING
WE DON'T WANT TO BE HERE IF KORT COMES BACK
THANK YOU I KNOW YOUR LOYALTY TO YOUR FAMILY--
HASN'T CHANGED
BUT SOMETIMES FAMILY MEANS MORE THAN JUST THOSE YOU'RE TIED TO BY BLOOD

BEAT TO QUARTERS!
LOOK LIVELY LADS! PLENTY OF SEA BETWEEN US AND THE EASTERN SHORE
BUT WE'LL MAKE LANDFALL BEFORE TWO MORE SUNSETS IF I HAVE TO TOSS YOU OVER TO PUSH!
FASCINATING CREATURES EVEN VIEWED FROM REAR

I ASSUME YOU'RE REFERRING TO THE SWIMMERS AND NOT THE REST OF US
I HAVE TO ADMIT, RECHTS, I'M STILL SURPRISED YOU CHOSE TO ACCOMPANY THIS VENTURE
I THOUGHT YOU WERE AN ADVISOR IN THIS WAR, NOT A PARTICIPANT
THIS WAR BETWEEN YOUR KINGDOM AND THAT OF THE RAVENS DRAGS ON PRINCE KAI BUT WE APPROACH A PIVOTAL MOMENT
THE RAVENS LAY SIEGE TO THE FORTRESS YOUR SISTER'S TAKEN. YLENA WON'T BE ABLE TO HOLD IT MUCH LONGER
IF WE LOSE IT, I HAVE SERIOUS DOUBTS WE'LL BE ABLE TO GAIN ANOTHER FOOTHOLD ON EASTERN SOIL
YOUR FATHER UNDERSTANDS HOW DIRE THE SITUATION HAS BECOME. HENCE HIS REQUEST FOR MY PRESENCE
IF THIS FORCE YOU COMMAND IS ENOUGH TO BREAK THE SIEGE WE NOT ONLY RESCUE YOUR SISTER, BUT PRESERVE OUR BEACHHEAD FOR INVASION
REST ASSURED W WILL RES YLENA
LEAVING ONLY ETHAN UNACCOUNTED FOR
HE SWORE VENGEANCE UPON BRON, AND SINCE THEN BRON'S BECOME KING THESE RUMORS OF ETHAN BEING SEEN IN THE RAVEN KEEP EVEN RISING FROM THE DEAD
I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO MAKE OF THEM

YOU'VE CERTAINLY EVINCED ENOUGH INTEREST IN ETHAN I SOMETIMES WONDER IF HE'S NOT YOUR SOLE CONCERN
ETHAN WILL PLAY A GREAT ROLE IN THE FUTURE, KAI MY INTEREST IN HIM MY INTEREST IN YOUR DYNASTY AS A WHOLE
IS TO ASSURE THAT FUTURE WILL BE PRESERVED
I DO HOPE
FOR YOUR SAKE
THAT'S THE TRUTH
YOU DON'T TRUST ME, DO YOU, KAI?
NO
I DON'T

"My hovership swept the ocean's roiling surface, pointed east. At the horizon, only the vastness of the Great Sea's unbroken swells. And beyond that, beyond the crimson sunrises, my true destination: war and black, bloody death."
From the logbooks of Admiral Edvin of the Heron Dynasty

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Axis Par in Scion

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Following a confrontation with Bron, Ethan escaped the Raven Keep accompanied by Ashleigh and his friend Skink. The trio arrived at the Underground's hidden sanctuary only to find it destroyed. At first blaming the bounty hunter Exeter, Ethan soon learned the truth – Raven forces had committed the atrocity.

Ethan had intended to journey home, but confronted with such tragedy, he vowed to accompany Ashleigh in her quest to destroy a Raven genetics facility. Attempting to make up for his past, Exeter volunteered his aid as well.

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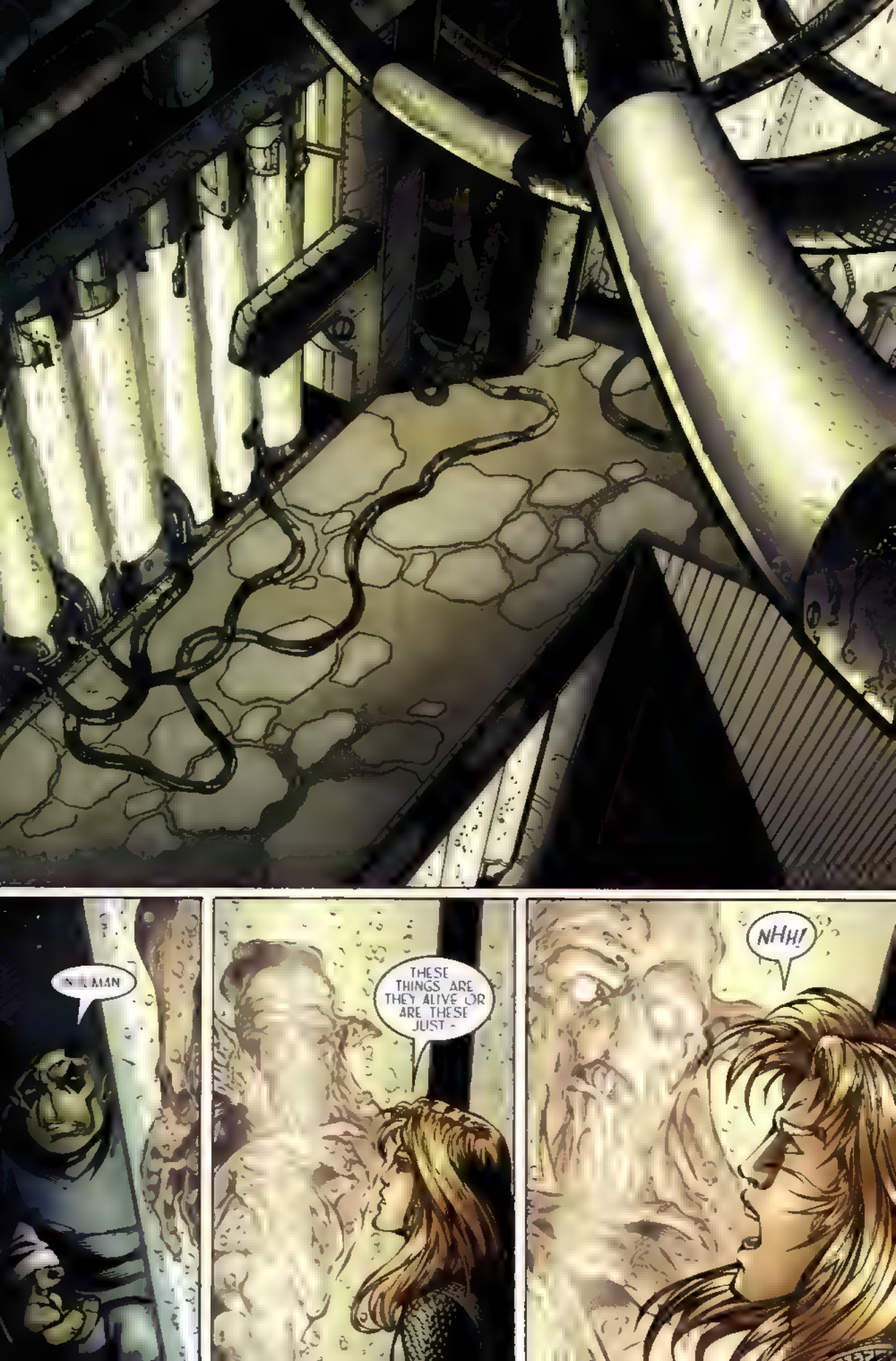
EXETER
WHAT'S GOING ON? HOW DO YOU KNOW SO MUCH ABOUT THIS PLACE?
WHY DON'T I SHOW YOU?

I NEVER
NEVER IMAGINED ANYTHING LIKE THIS
NOT IN ANY NIGHTMARE
THOSE OUTLAWS WHO ATTACKED US ON OUR JOURNEY NORTH THEY WERE SPAWNED HERE
ALL THIS IS THE PRODUCT OF ONE MAN
DOCTOR TYRRUS


HUMAN
THESE THINGS ARE THEY ALIVE OR ARE THESE JUST -
NHH!

THIS WAS WHERE YOU CAME FROM
I WAS CREATED HERE
NOT BORN
CREATED
I AM UNIQUE AN ATTEMPT TO PRODUCE A CREATURE THAT WOULD BE BIGGER
AND YOU ESCAPED?
BECAUSE I NEEDED AN END TO THE PAIN TO THE TORMENT PERHAPS IF I HADN'T ESCAPED HE WOULD HAVE MADE MORE LIKE ME
BY FLEEING I DAMNED MYSELF TO LONELINESS
I WAS AN OUTCAST AMONG OUTCASTS SHUNNED EVEN BY THOSE I BELIEVED TO BE MY OWN KIND
I FOUND MYSELF TO BE A CREATURE UNLIKE ANY OTHER

CAPABLE ONLY OF DESTRUCTION?
RRRR
STOP!
EXETER WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
SETTING THOSE POOR WRETCHES FREE
BY DESTROYING THEM
THEN YOU HAVE YOUR WISH

THIS IS A HORROR
HOW COULD ANYONE INFLICT THIS KIND OF CRUELTY ON A
LIVING CREATURE?
NOW DO YOU UNDERSTAND ETHAN? WHY THIS PLACE MUST BE DESTROYED?
BUT TO TAKE THE LIVES OF THESE CREATURES
THEY HAVE NO LIVES
THEY WOULD PERISH IF THEY WERE REMOVED FROM HERE
AND TO LEAVE THEM HERE IS TO CONDEMN THEM TO TORMENTS YOU CAN SCARCELY CONCEIVE
I'M NOT SURE WE HAVE THE RIGHT TO MAKE THAT DECISION FOR
VISITORS

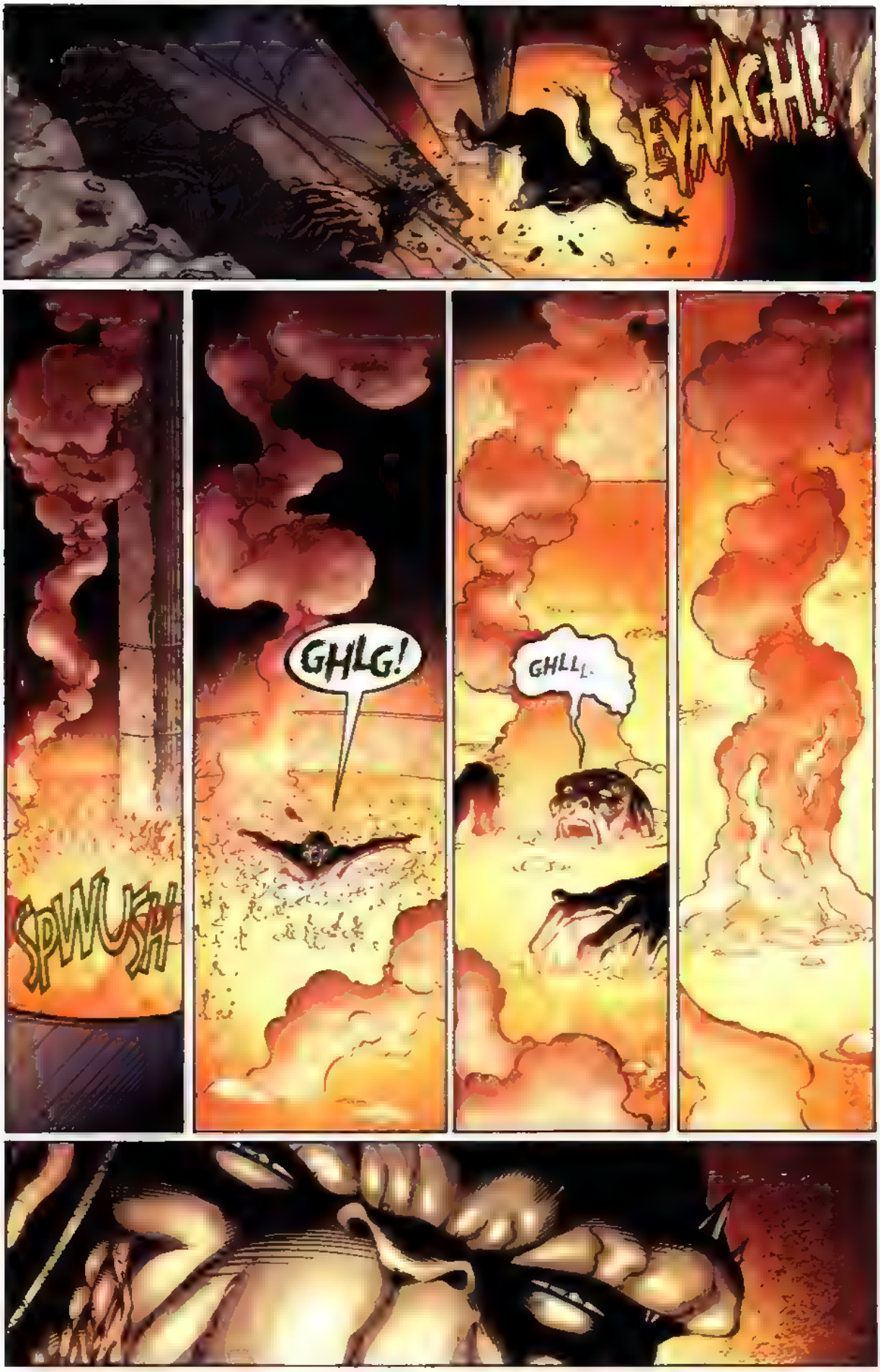
HRRR
"SALINEN"
THEY'RE FAILURES

HRRARGH
SKRASH!
TYRRUS!
GHLB
SLICH
I'M COMING FOR YOU!

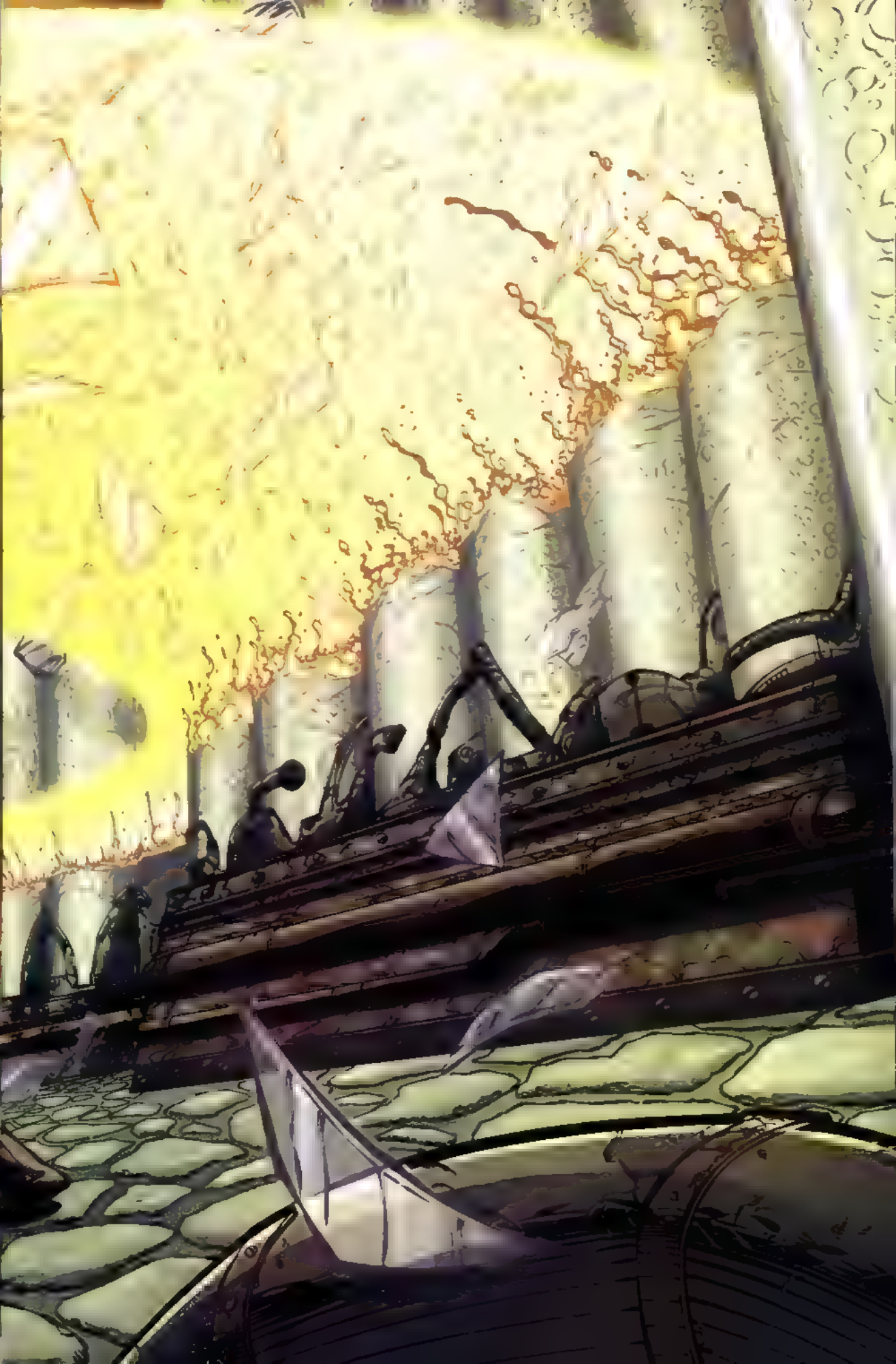
CHLUK
GLLRG
SHANG
REEEE!
DEATH

NOW REAP WHAT YOU VE SOWN!
I AM A PERSON, NOT A THING TYRRUS I HAVE A NAME
I COBBLED YOU TOGETHER FROM STRAY BITS OF TISSUE AND GREW YOU IN A TUBE
AH!
BUT YOU'RE STILL WHAT I MADE YOU TO BE
A MONSTER
I'VE DISCOVERED MORE HUMANITY IN MYSELF
SKRAKOOM!

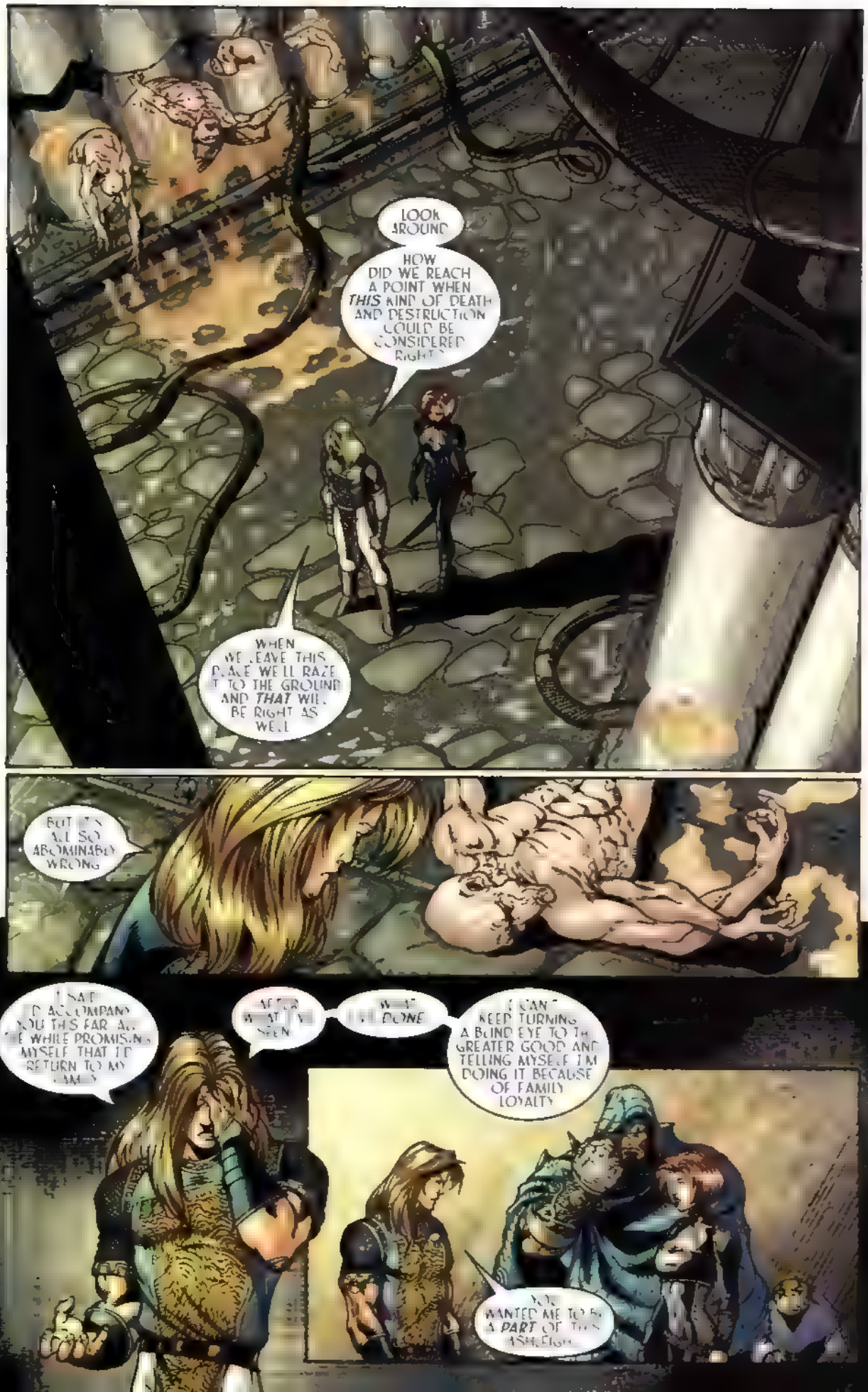
PLEASE
KRRRUMBBL
...SAVE ME!
GIVE ME YOUR HAND!
MERCY!
MERCY IS A HUMAN QUALITY. I AM A MONSTER
REMEMBER?
OK


EYAAGH!
SPWUSH
GHLG!
GHLL

SAYING THEM FELT WRONG BUT THEY WERE SO SAVAGE
ALMOST MINDLESS
WHAT OTHER CHOICE WAS THERE?
YOU CAN'T SHY AWAY FROM DOING WHAT'S NECESSARY ETHAN
EXETER? WHAT HAPPENED?
HE'S GONE
BY GONE
YES
AND HE WAS THE ONE WHO MADE YOU?
ME AND SO MANY OTHERS IF I HADN'T STOPPED HIM
HOW MANY MORE WOULD HE HAVE CREATED?



I KNOW
I UNDERSTAND THAT
BUT IT DOESN'T MAKE HAVING DONE IT ANY EASIER TO ACCEPT


LOOK AROUND
HOW DID WE REACH A POINT WHEN *THIS* KIND OF DEATH AND DESTRUCTION COULD BE CONSIDERED RIGHT?
WHEN WE LEAVE THIS PLACE WE'LL RAZE IT TO THE GROUND AND *THAT* WILL BE RIGHT AS WELL
BUT IT'S ALL SO ABOMINABLY WRONG
I SAID I'D ACCOMPANY YOU THIS FAR AND WHILE PROMISING MYSELF THAT I'D RETURN TO MY FAMILY
AFTER WHAT I'VE SEEN
WHAT I'VE DONE
I CAN'T KEEP TURNING A BLIND EYE TO THE GREATER GOOD AND TELLING MYSELF I'M DOING IT BECAUSE OF FAMILY LOYALTY
YOU WANTED ME TO BE A *PART* OF THIS ASHE[illegible]

YOU HAVE ME
WHATEVER YOU NEED WHATEVER THE UNDERGROUND NEEDS, FROM NOW ON MY FIRST LOYALTY IS TO YOU

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Thus Far In Scion

What started with a mysterious sigil led to war. Prince Ethan of the West-ruling Heron Dynasty was graced with a mark granting him power, leading to the accidental scarring of Prince Bron of the East-ruling Raven Dynasty during ritual combat.

Ethan surrendered himself to the Ravens but was soon freed from his imprisonment by a woman named Ashleigh who wanted Ethan to join the Underground cause of freedom for the genetically engineered Lesser Races. Ethan declined her offer and set off for home as war loomed.

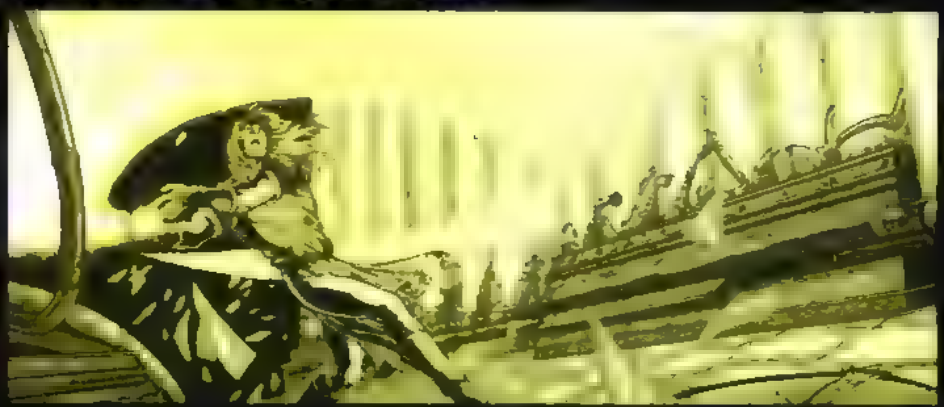
When the battle was met, first victory belonged to the Herons, but Ethan's oldest brother and heir to the throne, Artor, was brutally slain by Bron. Ethan vowed to have his revenge and returned to Eastern lands.

RECENTLY

The mysterious Mai Shen revealed herself as a member of the godlike First and imbued Bron with a portion of her power. Bron then murdered his father King Viktor, framed Ashleigh – his sister – for the crime and took the throne for himself.

Following a confrontation with Bron, Ethan escaped the Raven Keep with Ashleigh and his Lesser Races friend, Skink. The trio arrived at the Underground's hidden sanctuary only to find it destroyed at the hands of Raven forces.

Joined by the bounty hunter Exeter, Ethan agreed to accompany Ashleigh to destroy a Raven genetics installation. Seeing the facility's atrocities firsthand finally convinced Ethan to pledge his loyalty to the Underground cause.



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WHAT TRANSPIRES TODAY MIGHT WELL DECIDE THE FATE OF NOT ONLY OUR KINGDOM BUT OUR *CHILDREN* AS WELL
I *FEAR* THE OUTCOME

AND ALL WE CAN DO IS REMAIN HERE AND *WAIT* AS A *KING* MARRIES
AND WE FEEL UTTERLY HELPLESS
WE KNEW THIS DAY MIGHT COME DAME
THE BURDEN OF SOVEREIGNTY IS A HEAVY ONE SOMETIMES WE'RE GIVEN NO *CHOICE* BUT TO MAKE SACRIFICES
WAR WITH THE RAVENS WAS INEVITABLE IF NOT DURING MY REIGN THEN DURING THAT OF MY HEIR
I DID NOT *PURSUE* THIS STRUGGLE BUT I DID NOT SHRINK FROM IT NOW THERE'S NO TURNING FROM IT
I WONDER IF ANY OF US ARE WILLING TO PAY THE PRICE THAT VICTORY REQUIRES WE'VE *ALREADY* BURIED A FEW

GYAAGH!
BARRAGE FROM THEIR DAMNED SHIPS IN THE HARBOR GIVES US NO RESPITE
AIR SUPPORT! WHAT HAPPENED TO OUR AIR SUPPORT?
=GHH=
=HHH=
THE LIMB WILL FUNCTION AS IT DID BEFORE

I NEED YOU TO LEARN... WE DON'T SEND A MAN SO RECENTLY WOUNDED BACK TO THE LINE BUT WE'RE DESPERATE FOR EVERY SWORD ARM

AND RETREAT WE MIGHT'VE HAD HAS BEEN CUT OFF

WE'RE CAUGHT BETWEEN OUR OWN FORTRESS AND THE HERON KINGDOM AND THEY'RE USING ONE TO SMASH US AGAINST THE OTHER

IF YOU EXPECT TO GET HOME TO YOUR WIFE AND DAUGHTER THE ONLY WAY IS THROUGH THAT BATTLEFIELD

I UNDERSTAND SIR

HAVING THE ARROGANCE TO SET FOOT ON RAVEN SOIL COMES WITH A PRICE

THE HERONS MIGHT TAKE THIS SCRAP

BUT THEY'LL PAY FOR EVERY YARD OF IT IN BLOOD

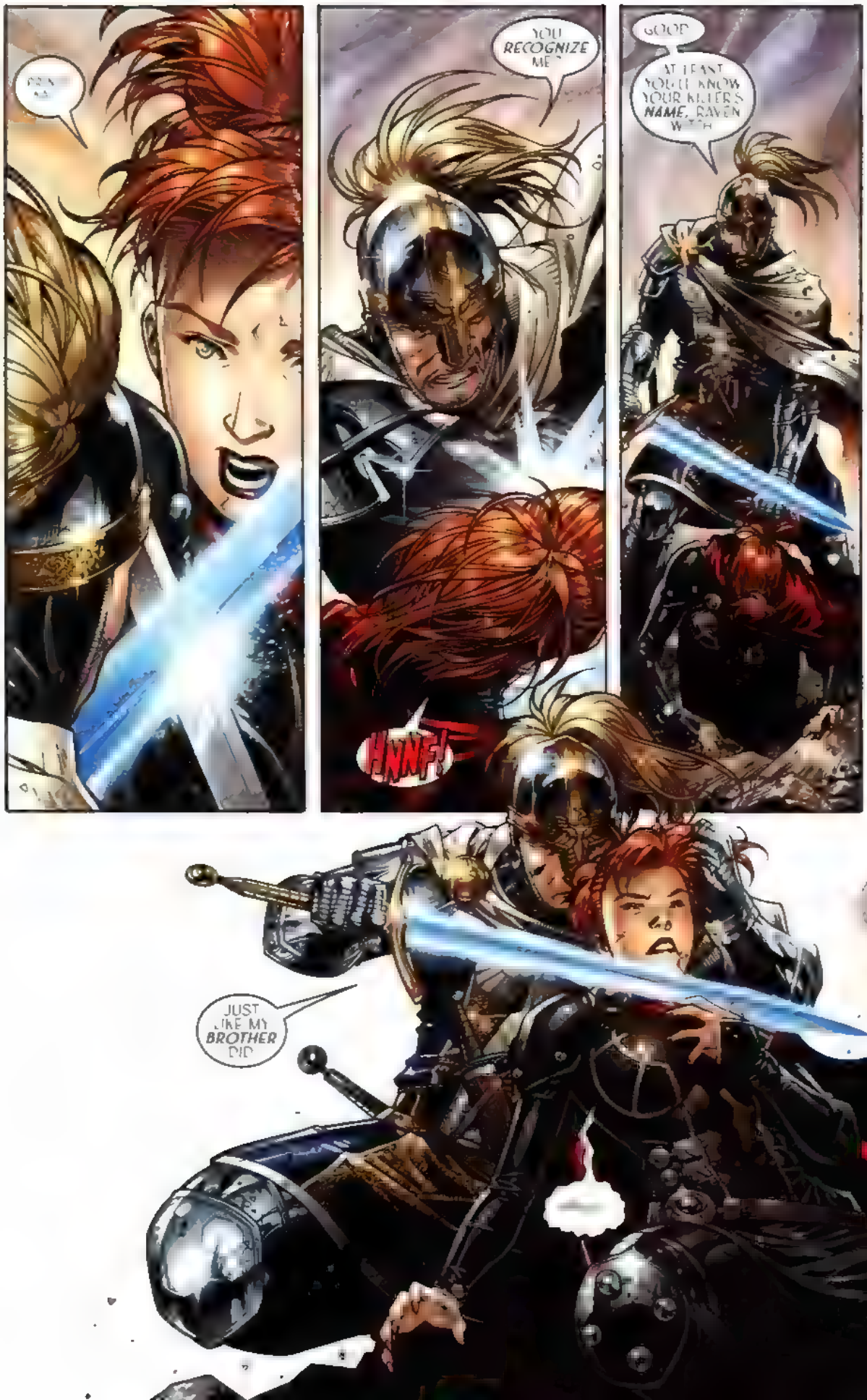
FOR THE RUBY THRONE!
WESTERN BUTCHER!
YOU AND YOUR INVASION DIE HERE!
SHANG
WE'LL DRIVE YOU BACK INTO THE SEA ALL OF
HRK!
YHG!

WELL STRUCK, PRINCE KAI!
PRESS THE ADVANCE!
I WANT THE SIEGE FOR'T DESTROYED BEFORE THE SUN DIPS!
GLLK
FORWARD!
UHH...

THE RAVENS FLY BEFORE US!
THE DAY IS OURS, MY PRINCE!
NOT YET OURS
NOT UNTIL WHAT'S LEFT OF THIS RABBLE IS ROUTED
AND WE GAIN THE FORTRESS TO FIND MY SISTER
THEN WE'D BEST MAKE HASTE! WE'RE RUNNING OUT OF RAVEN BLOOD TO SPILL!
I WAS ONCE THAT RECKLESS

HERE
...FACE ME!
AHF!
SHINK
CLANK
GAAH!

THERE'S ALWAYS ANOTHER TO TAKE YOUR PLACE
SWANG


YOU RECOGNIZE ME?
GOOD
AT LEAST YOU'LL KNOW YOUR KILLER'S NAME, RAVEN WITCH
HNNF!
JUST LIKE MY BROTHER DID

KAI!
WHUMP
ETHAN!

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN DOING SINCE YOU LEFT HOME?
IT'S KIND OF A LONG STORY BUT I'VE –
AND WHY ARE YOU SAVING SOME RAVEN SOLDIER?
ARE YOU OKAY?
I'VE HAD WORSE THAN A SPLIT LIP
I'LL BE FINE
SHE'S NOT A RAVEN SOLDIER
SHE'S A RAVEN PRINCESS KAI, THIS IS ASHLEIGH
ASHLEIGH THIS IS MY BROTHER KAI
WE'VE MET
YOU'RE TELLING ME YOU'RE KEEPING COMPANY WITH THE SISTER OF THE MAN WHO KILLED ARTOR?
ASHLEIGH'S NOT LIKE BRON
SHE HATES HIM AS MUCH AS WE DO

SO YOU'RE WHAT?
TOGETHER SOMEHOW?
LOVERS?
NO
I THINK I NEED TO HEAR THIS FROM THE BEGINNING LITTLE BROTHER
WHAT HAPPENED ONCE YOU REACHED RAVEN LANDS?
I DIDN'T FIND ASHLEIGH INITIALLY SO I WENT TO RAVEN KEEP SHE WAS THERE
AND THAT'S WHERE I LEARNED WHO SHE WAS
I FOUGHT BRON BUT I WASN'T ABLE TO KILL HIM I'D PROBABLY BE DEAD IF ASHLEIGH HADN'T HELPED ME ESCAPE
OTHER THINGS HAPPENED ALONG THE WAY BUT EVENTUALLY WE HEARD THE NEWS THAT YLENA AND HERON TROOPS WERE UNDER SIEGE HERE
OBVIOUSLY I DIDN'T KNOW YOU'D BE ARRIVING WITH A LANDING FORCE. SO WE CAME TO SEE WHAT WE COULD DO TO HELP
WE BEING MORE THAN JUST ME AND ASHLEIGH
WFF!

POCKETS OF RESISTANCE REMAIN
AS YOU JUST SAW
BUT THOSE ARE BEING DISPOSED OF QUICKLY
THE BATTLE'S NEARLY OVER ETHAN
IT'S UNEXPECTED BUT IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN SIRE
AS I PROMISED I DID LOOK AFTER ETHAN
I KNEW YOU WOULD SHANK I'M PLEASED TO SEE YOU AS WELL
WHO'S YOUR LARGE FRIEND?
I AM EXETER
THAT EXETER? THE BOUNTY HUNTER EXETER?
I CAN'T WAIT TO HEAR THIS STORY ETHAN'S ALWAYS HAD A THING ABOUT STRAYS FOLLOWING HIM HOME
THERE'S A CLEAR PASSAGE TO THE FORTRESS NOW ETHAN WE SHOULD BEGIN MAKING OUR WAY THERE
I AGREE
WE'LL JUST HAVE TO STEP OVER THE RAVEN BODIES ON OUR WAY
ANY TROUBLE FIGURING OUT WHICH SIDE TO FIGHT ON PRINCESS?

THERE'S MUCH I DON'T AGREE WITH WHERE MY DYNASTY IS CONCERNED ESPECIALLY NOW THAT MY BROTHER SITS UPON THE THRONE
BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN I'VE COMPLETELY TURNED MY BACK ON MY HERITAGE EITHER
I JOINED THE UNDERGROUND CAUSE BECAUSE I WANT TO FREE THE LESSER RACES FROM THE CRUELTY OF THEIR ENSLAVEMENT NOT BECAUSE I WANT TO DESTROY MY KINGDOM
YOU THINK IT WAS EASY FOR ME BEING IN THE MIDST OF A BATTLE LIKE THIS, WONDERING WHICH SIDE I'M SUPPOSED TO RAISE MY SWORD AGAINST?
THAT'S HOW I'VE HAD TO LIVE MOST OF MY *LIFE*
I HARMED *NO ONE*
LEAVE HER *ALONE*, KAI THIS ISN'T THE TIME OR PLACE FOR THIS DISCUSSION
ALL RIGHT LITTLE BROTHER
BUT YOU AND I ARE GOING TO HAVE A GREAT DEAL TO TALK ABOUT

THE FORTRESS IS SECURED TROOPER?
AYE SIRE THE RAVENS NEVER BREACHED US, THOUGH THE STATE OF THE SIEGE WAS BECOMING DIRE
I DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH LONGER WE WOULD'VE BEEN ABLE TO HOLD OUT IF YOU HADN'T DELIVERED US
YOU DID WELL TO HOLD OUT AS LONG AS YOU DID. OUR BEACHHEAD FOR INVASION IS ESTABLISHED
KNOW THAT

WHERE CAN I FIND THE PRINCESS?
FOLLOW THIS CORRIDOR TO THE CHAMBER BEYOND. THAT'S WHERE I LAST SAW HER

MOTHER AND FATHER WILL BE ANXIOUS TO SEE YOU ETHAN
WELL I'M NOT SURE I'M

YLENA!

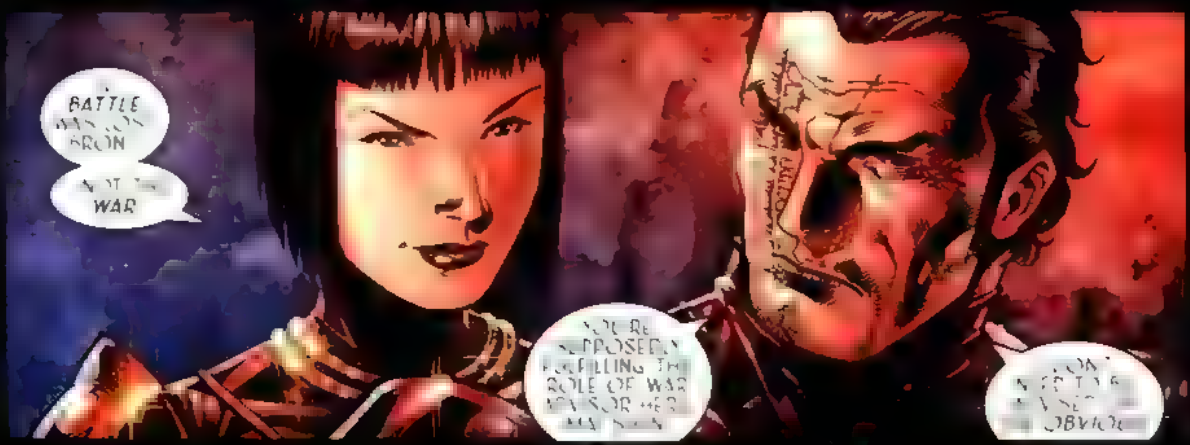
KAI?
ETHAN?!
APOLOGIES FOR TAKING SO LONG TO GET HERE, SISTER. YOU PROBABLY HADN'T EVEN NOTICED.
BUT THERE WAS A MINOR DISTURBANCE WE NEEDED TO TIDY UP OUTSIDE.
I'M HAPPY THE SIEGE IS BROKEN.
BUT I THINK I'M HAPPIER TO SEE YOU TWO.

I NEVER EXPECTED WE'D BE HOLDING A FAMILY REUNION ON RAVEN SO!
PARTICULARLY WITH OUR WANDERING [illegible] BROTHER AS A SURPRISE GUEST!
YOU'VE BEEN IN THE FAST [illegible] THIS TIME THAN
I'VE SEEN MORE OF THIS LAND THAN I EVER WANTED TO
ALTHOUGH I WASN'T ABLE TO AVENGE ARTOS
BRON [illegible]
I'M JUST GLAD YOU STILL LIVE
I'VE LOST ONE BROTHER I'M NOT LOSING ANOTHER
HOW DID YOU GET HERE, RECHTS? I THOUGHT YOU WERE STILL ON THE FLAGSHIP
I CAME ASHORE ONCE THE BATTLE'S OUTCOME WAS DECIDED, PRINCE KAI
MY CHIEF CONCERN WAS TO ASSURE YOUR SISTER'S SAFETY
THANK YOU FOR WHATEVER PART YOU PLAYED IN THE PLANNING OF THIS [illegible] VICTORY, RECHTS
YOU'RE TOO KIND, PRINCE [illegible]
STRATEGY IS WORTHLESS WITHOUT VALIANT WARRIORS TO CARRY OUT THE CAMPAIGN
IT'S A RELIEF TO FIND YOU SAFE AND SOUND, YOUNG HERON
HOW SOON DO YOU EXPECT TO BE RETURNING HOME?

WE'LL PUT YOU ON THE HOVERSHIP THAT'S TAKING THE WOUNDED BACK HOME
YOU'LL BE STANDING ON WESTERN SOIL IN TWO DAYS MAX
I APPRECIATE THE OFFER
BUT I AIN'T BE GOING
YOU MEAN YOU WANT TO STAY WITH THE INVASION FORCE
I MEAN I AM STAYING HERE
BUT I AIN'T BE PART OF THE WAR EFFORT
I'VE PROMISED ASHLEIGH MY FIRST LOYALTY WOULD BE TO THE UNDERGROUND'S CAUSE

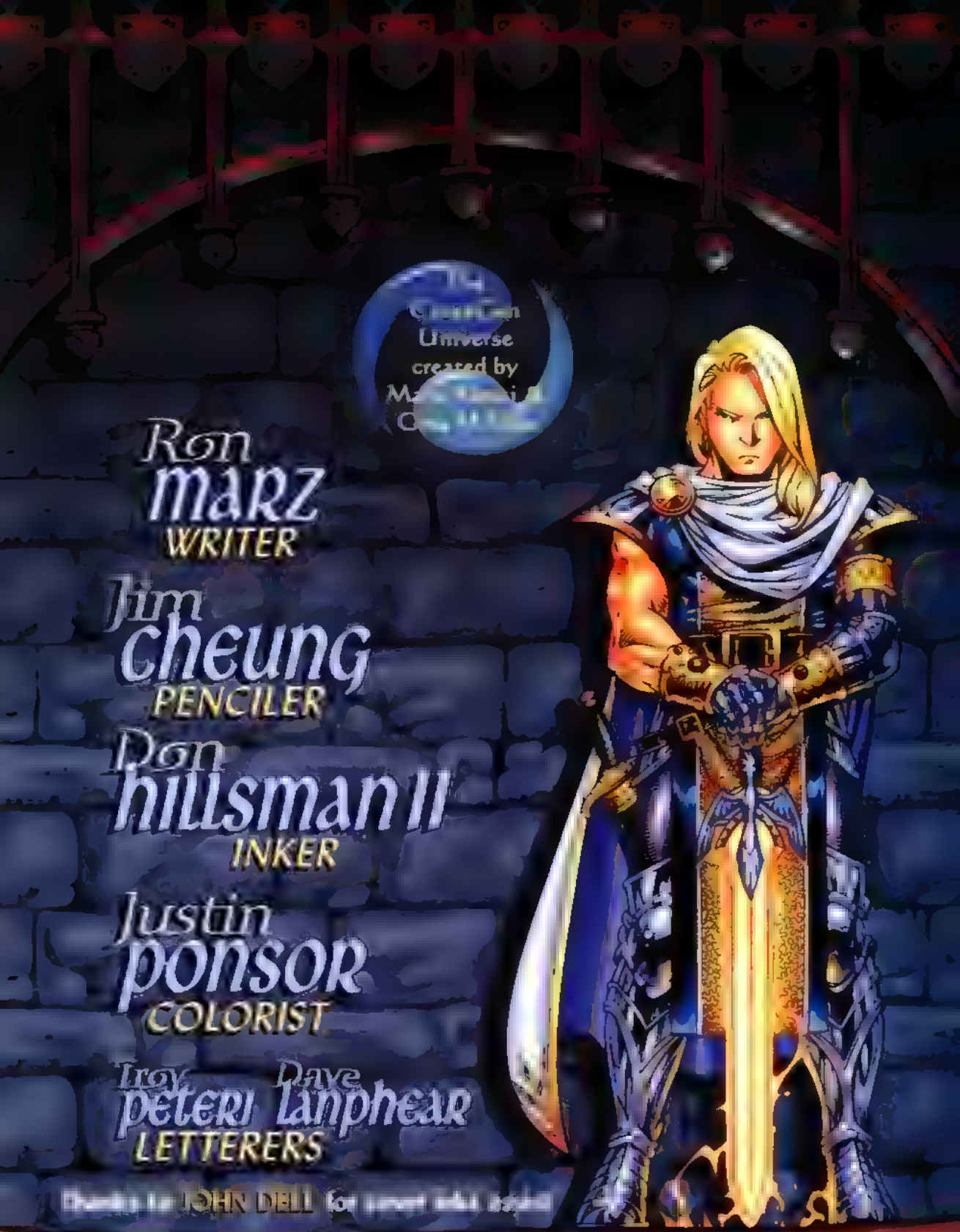
DAMN THEM!
SKRAKK

NOW
I'VE BEEN
LESS THAN
MONTH I WON'T
THE PEOPLE
THINKING I CAN'T
EVEN PROTECT
MY OWN


BATTLE
WAR
ROLE OF WAR

THIS
RATHER
THAN USING
THE POWER
OTHERS
MISTAKE
AGAIN

THERE ARE HERON TROOPS ON THE SOIL OF MY KINGDOM AND MY TRAITOROUS SISTER AND THAT WHELP ETHAN HAVE THUS FAR ELUDED MY GRASP.
I'LL GIVE THEM ALL REASON TO FEAR ME.



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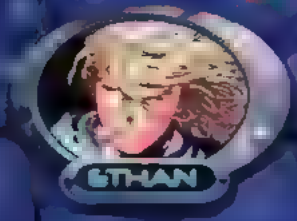

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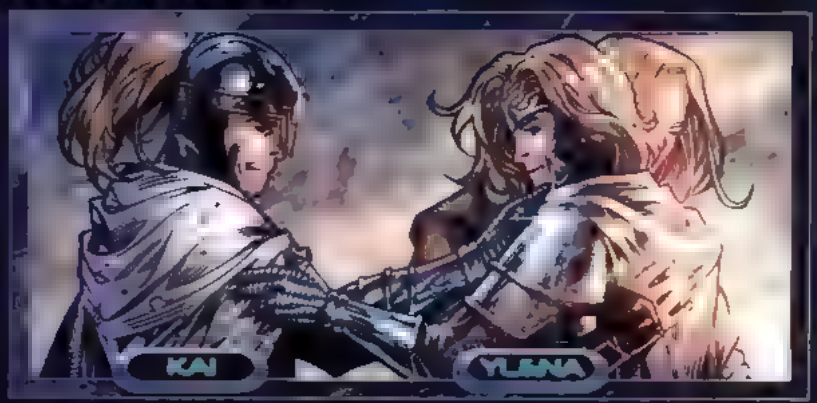
Following a confrontation with Bron, Ethan escaped the Raven Keep with Ashleigh and his Lesser Races friend Skink. The trio arrived at the Underground's hidden sanctuary only to find it destroyed at the hands of Raven forces. Ethan finally pledged his loyalty to the Underground's cause.

Accompanied by Ashleigh, Skink and the bounty hunter Exeter, Ethan journeyed to a Raven coastal fortress that had been conquered by an invading Heron force. There he met his brother Kai and sister Ylena, and to their shock, told them he would not be aiding the war effort.



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YOU PROMISED HER WHAT?"

PROMISED
I'M GOING TO KEEP THAT PROMISE
THEN WHY EVEN COME HERE IF YOU WERE PLANNING TO TURN YOUR BACK ON US?
BECAUSE I FOUND OUT YLENA WAS UNDER SIEGE. I HAD NO WAY OF KNOWING YOU WERE ON YOUR WAY
SO I CAME TO TRY TO MAKE CERTAIN SHE WAS SAFE
DO YOU REMEMBER
THIS INVASION FORCE NEEDS YOU NOW THAT WE'VE GAINED A FOOTHOLD ON EASTERN SOIL
I'M JUST ANOTHER SWORD ARM TO YOUR ARMY KAI
BUT I CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE WITH THE UNDERGROUND

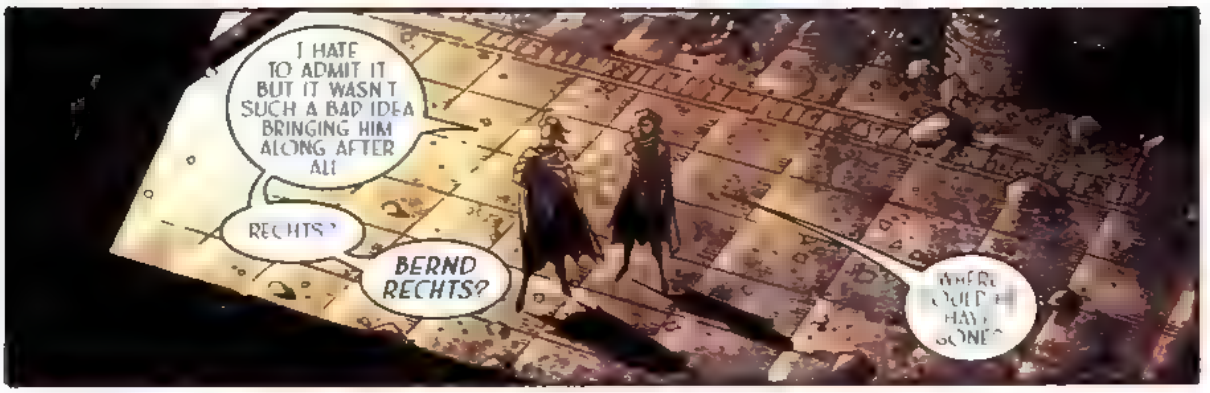
YOU'RE MORE THAN ONE SWORD ARM, ETHAN. YOU KNOW THAT AS WELL AS I DO
BUT I SEE WHAT'S GOING ON HERE
WHO'S REALLY MAKING THE DECISIONS
THAT'S NOT THE WAY IT IS
WHAT WOULD YOU SAY IF I TOLD YOU ASHLEIGH HAD SAVED MY LIFE
I'D SAY HER BROTHER KILLED ARTOR
DAMN IT, ETHAN, YOU'RE A MAN NOW! YOU DON'T HAVE TIME FOR ADOLESCENT QUESTS ANYMORE!
YOU'RE RIGHT, KAL. I AM A MAN NOW
SO I THOUGHT IT WAS TIME I STARTED ACTING LIKE ONE
SKINK, YOU PRACTICALLY RAISED HIM. TALK SOME SENSE INTO HIM
I'M SORRY, PRINCE KAL. IT'S NOT MY PLACE
ETHAN IS DOING WHAT HE FEELS HE MUST. HE'S MAKING HIS OWN CHOICES
NO
NO. I DON'T SUPPOSE YOU WOULD WANT TO TALK HIM OUT OF THIS FOOLISHNESS
HAVING MY BROTHER BELIEVING HE'S GOING TO BE A SAVIOR TO THE LESSER RACES PROBABLY SUITS YOUR PURPOSES JUST FINE

IT'S MY DECISION NO ONE ELSE'S AND IT'S NOT ONE I CAME TO LIGHTLY BUT THE THINGS I KNOW
THE THINGS I'VE SEEN
MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR ME TO DO ANYTHING ELSE THE UNDERGROUND INTENDS TO FREE THE LESSER RACES FROM THEIR SLAVERY
I BELIEVE IT'S AN IDEAL WORTH FIGHTING FOR
I DON'T EXPECT YOU TO UNDERSTAND, KAI YOU HAVEN'T BEEN THROUGH WHAT I'VE BEEN THROUGH
BUT I DO EXPECT YOU TO TRUST ME WHEN I SAY THERE'S A GREATER GOOD TO BE SERVED
I AM
I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY YOU'RE DOING THIS
BUT I WON'T STAND IN YOUR WAY
I HOPE THAT'S WHAT YOU'RE DOING NOW
I'M SURE
SO YOU'RE ACTUALLY GOING THROUGH WITH THIS
WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO TELL OUR PARENTS?
WHAT I ALWAYS TELL THEM
TELL THEM I LOVE THEM

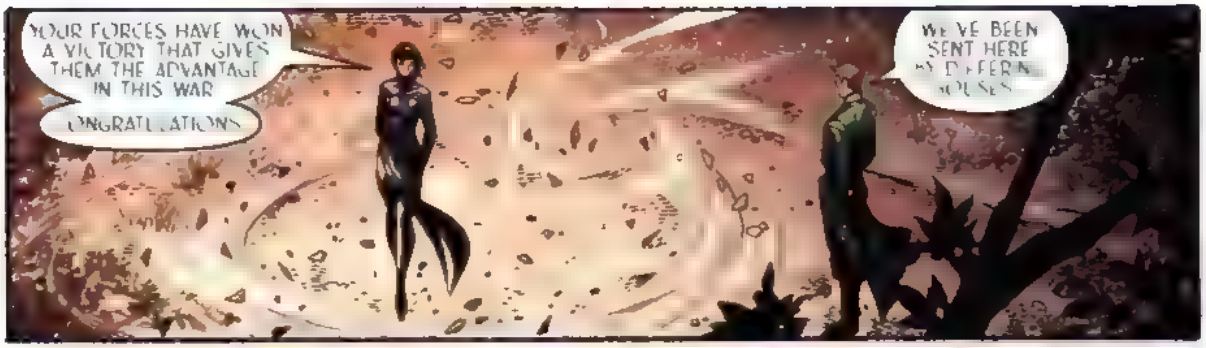
ASHLEIGH?
I REALIZE WE DON'T KNOW EACH OTHER BUT THERE'S SOMETHING I WANT TO ASK OF YOU PLEASE
TAKE CARE OF MY BROTHER
WE ARE IN OF EACH OTHER

I CAN'T BELIEVE HE'S WALKING AWAY FROM US LIKE THIS
HE'S ALWAYS FOLLOWED HIS OWN PATH KAT IT'S NOT DIFFERENT NOW

THE INVASION WON'T BE NEARLY AS STRONG WITHOUT ETHAN
WE SHOULD CONFER WITH RECHTS ON THE

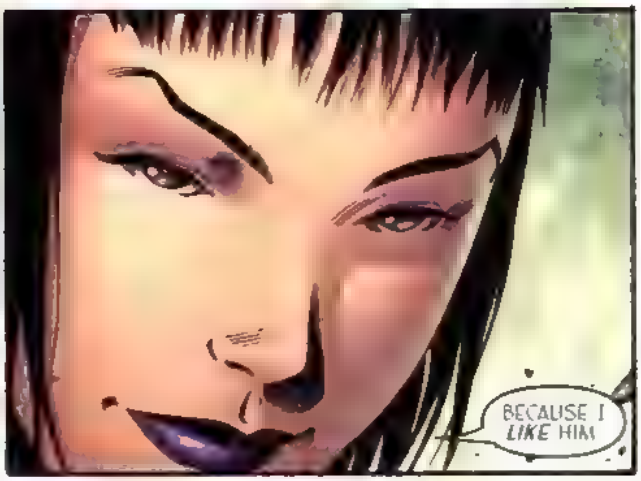

I HATE TO ADMIT IT BUT IT WASN'T SUCH A BAD IDEA BRINGING HIM ALONG AFTER ALL
RECHTS?
BERND RECHTS?
WHERE COULD HE HAVE GONE?

QUITE A SECLUDED LOCATION YOU'VE SELECTED
HOW SO WAS THIS WE ACTUALLY MET
AND I THOUGHT - BEST IF WE DID SO IN PRIVATE


YOUR FORCES HAVE WON A VICTORY THAT GIVES THEM THE ADVANTAGE IN THIS WAR
CONGRATULATIONS
WE'VE BEEN SENT HERE BY DIFFERING HOUSES

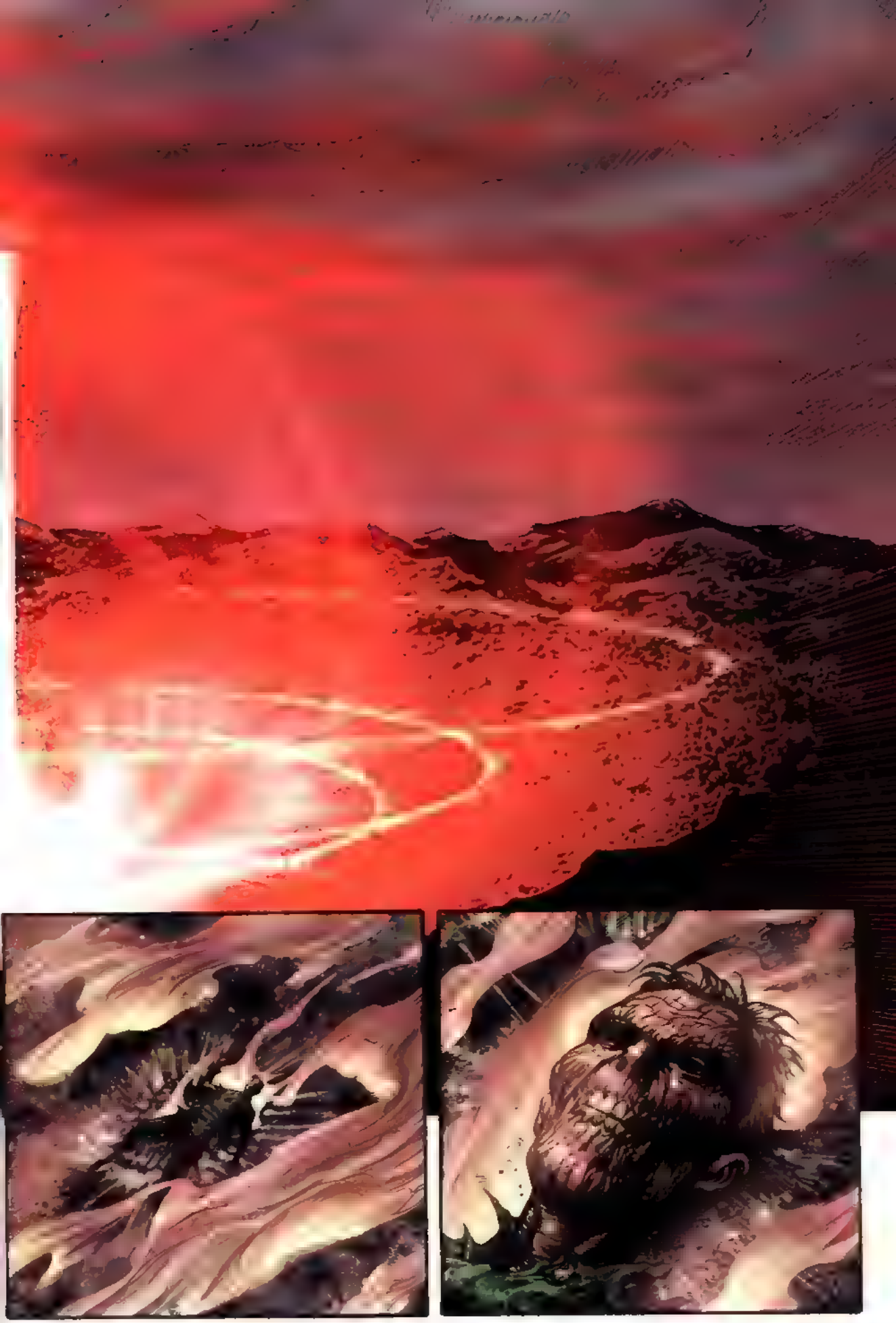
BUT OUR PURPOSES ARE THE SAME
YOUR DUTY MIRRORS MY OWN - MONITOR THE SIGIL BEARER AND BRING HIM UNDER OUR CONTROL
SO WHY DON'T WE DISPENSE WITH THE FACADE OF CARING ABOUT THIS CONFLICT
THE OUTCOME OF THIS WAR IS MEANINGLESS TO OUR KIND

IT'S MY UNDERSTANDING YOU'VE GIVEN A PORTION OF YOUR POWER TO ONE OF THE HEARTHS


BECAUSE I LIKE HIM

UNDERSTAND, I HAVE NO INTEREST IN SEEING YOU SUCCEED
YET I CAN'T HELP BUT QUESTION THE WISDOM OF SUCH A GIFT IN PURSUIT OF THE GREATER GOAL
YOUR LESS OBVIOUS METHODS HAVEN'T PRODUCED A GREAT DEAL OF
WHAT IS IT
ARE YOU ANYTHING SPECIAL WHERE WE COME FROM? ONE OF THE BRIGHT FEW?
I'M NOT I DOUBT YOU ARE EITHER
WE'RE LITTLE MORE THAN GLORIFIED LACKEYS THAT'S WHY WE WERE SENT HERE
THAT'S WHY I INTEND TO STAY HERE
I'M GOING TO RULE THIS WORLD
RATHER THAN SERVE UPON YOURS
YOU'RE SERIOUS
THERE WAS ANOTHER TURNCOAT, YOU KNOW ON ANOTHER WORLD HE CAME TO AN ILL END
THAT'S THE FATE YOU'RE CHOOSING
HAVE YOU NO LOYALTY, EVEN TO YOUR OWN HOUSE?

IS TO
MYSELF!
KRAITH
STAND!
I WON'T
A RENEGADE!
I WILL BE A
GODDESS!

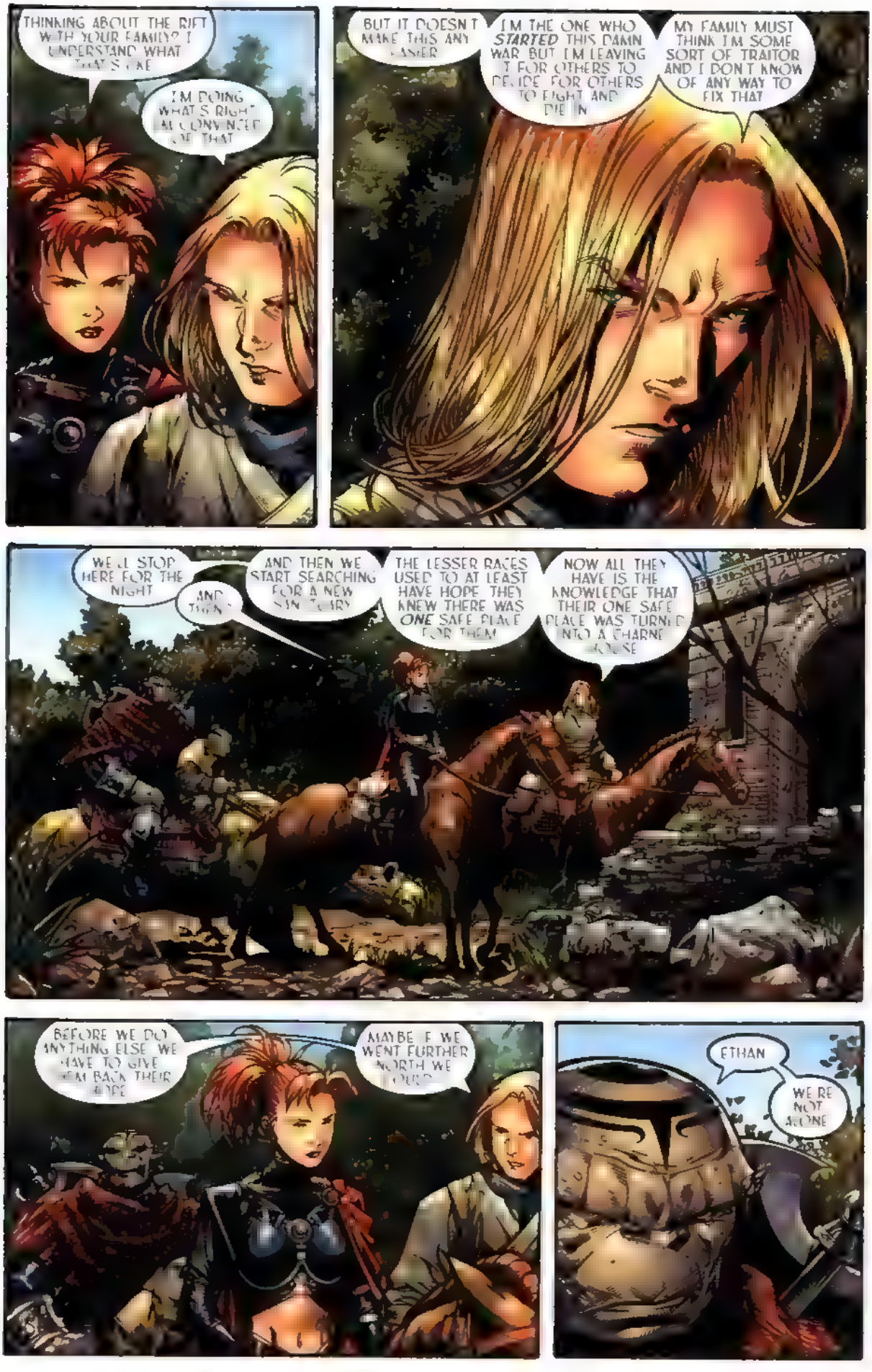


WHERE IS SHE?!
WHO,
MAI SHEN
NOW THAT THE DAMNED HERONS HAVE SECURED THE COAST I WANT A STRATEGY IN PLACE TO DEAL WITH THE INVASION THAT'S OBVIOUSLY COMING

SO I WANT TO KNOW WHERE
HOW SHOULD I KNOW? SHE'S YOUR
WHATEVER
YOU'D SO WELL TO MIND THAT GLIB TONGUE OF YOURS BOY
DON'T GIVE ME CAUSE TO DOUBT YOUR LOYALTY
I ALREADY HAVE ONE SIBLING UNDER A DEATH SENTENCE
BUT I'M ALSO YOUR KING
YOU DON'T WANT TO UNDERESTIMATE ME
NO
THAT WAS FATHER'S
WASN'T

BOYS
WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN?
AS FOND AS I AM OF YOU BRON
DON'T PRESUME IT'S MY RESPONSIBILITY TO ANSWER TO YOU
BUT AS I AM FOND OF YOU
I WAS AWAY FROM THE KEEP DEALING WITH CERTAIN STRATEGIC CONCERNS
WHAT CONCERNS
WHY DON'T WE JUST SAY THAT I DOUBT THE HERON MILITARY WILL POSE QUITE SO MUCH OF A THREAT ANYMORE
THIS WAY YOUR MAJESTY
WE HAVE A GREAT MANY THINGS TO DISCUSS

WAS FORTUNATE THERE WERE SOME MOUNTS LEFT BEHIND WHEN THE RAVEN ARMY RETREATED. WE NEVER WOULD'VE MADE IT THIS FAR BEFORE
THESE ARE THE RUINS WHERE YOU BEDDED DOWN AFTER WE PARTED WAYS THAT FIRST
ETHAN?
THAT'S
ETHAN
JUST A GUESS


THINKING ABOUT THE RIFT WITH YOUR FAMILY? I UNDERSTAND WHAT THAT'S LIKE
I'M DOING WHAT'S RIGHT AND CONVINCED ME THAT
BUT IT DOESN'T MAKE THIS ANY EASIER
I'M THE ONE WHO STARTED THIS DAMN WAR BUT I'M LEAVING IT FOR OTHERS TO DECIDE FOR OTHERS TO FIGHT AND DIE IN
MY FAMILY MUST THINK I'M SOME SORT OF TRAITOR AND I DON'T KNOW OF ANY WAY TO FIX THAT
WE'LL STOP HERE FOR THE NIGHT
AND THEN WE START SEARCHING FOR A NEW SAN CTUARY
THE LESSER RACES USED TO AT LEAST HAVE HOPE THEY KNEW THERE WAS ONE SAFE PLACE FOR THEM
NOW ALL THEY HAVE IS THE KNOWLEDGE THAT THEIR ONE SAFE PLACE WAS TURNED INTO A CHARNEL HOUSE
BEFORE WE DO ANYTHING ELSE WE HAVE TO GIVE THEM BACK THEIR HOPE
MAYBE IF WE WENT FURTHER NORTH WE COULD
ETHAN
WE'RE NOT ALONE

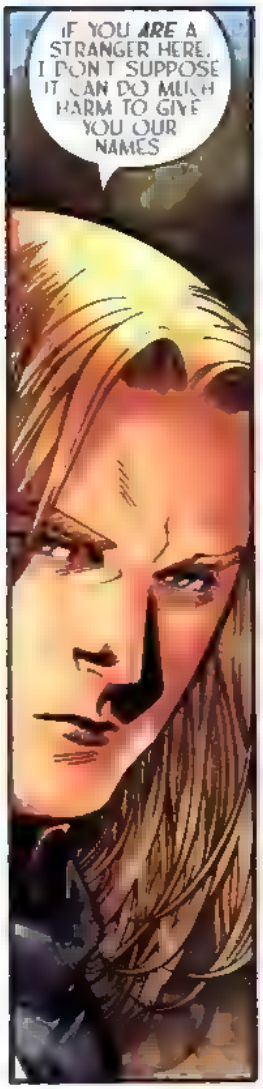
THRUNCH

WYVERN!
HOLD ON!
HSSST

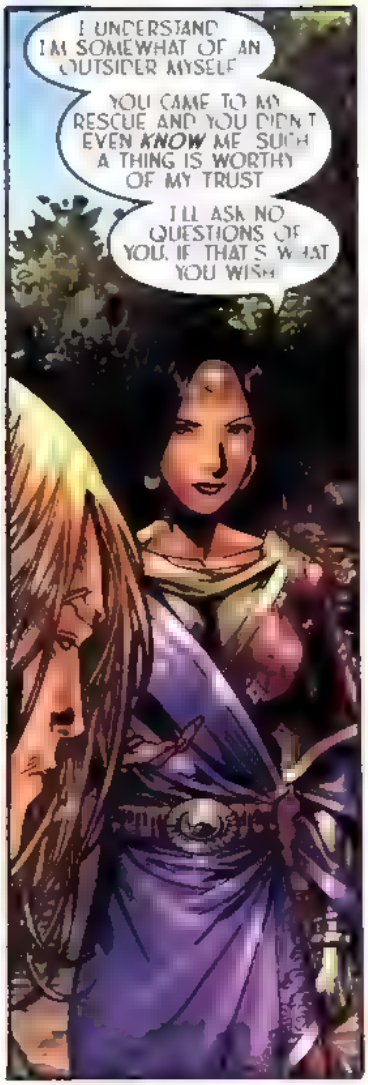
WTF!
WHUMPT
KRCHH
KNH
KRAKT
KREEECH

ETHAN!
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
FINE
NO, NOT SERIOUSLY
BUT I FEAR I WOULD'VE BEEN IF YOU HADN'T HAPPENED
THANK YOU
WELL THE REST YOU KNOW
MY NAME IS NADIA THIND!

PERHAPS SUCH THINGS ARE DIFFERENT HERE IN RAVEN LANDS
BUT WHERE I COME FROM IT'S CUSTOMARY TO INTRODUCE YOURSELVES WHEN SOMEONE HAS GIVEN *YOU* THAT COURTESY


IF YOU *ARE* A STRANGER HERE, I DON'T SUPPOSE IT CAN DO MUCH HARM TO GIVE YOU OUR NAMES

I'M *ETHAN*
THIS IS EXETER
ASHLEIGH
AND SKINK
WE'RE WHAT YOU MIGHT CALL *UNDER-APPRECIATED* BY THE RAVEN KING


I UNDERSTAND I'M SOMEWHAT OF AN OUTSIDER MYSELF
YOU CAME TO MY RESCUE AND YOU DIDN'T EVEN *KNOW* ME. SUCH A THING IS WORTHY OF MY TRUST
I'LL ASK NO QUESTIONS OF YOU, IF THAT'S WHAT YOU WISH

I'M PLEASED TO MEET YOU
I'M SORRY ACCEPT MY APOLOGIES IF YOU FIND ME RUDE BUT
YOUR OTHER HAND
IT'S MECHANICAL THE RESULT OF AN INJURY I SUFFERED A NUMBER OF YEARS AGO
PLEASE, I'VE MADE CAMP INSIDE THE RUINS I HAVEN'T MUCH TO OFFER IN THE WAY OF COMFORTS, BUT YOU'RE ALL WELCOME TO JOIN ME
YOU'RE VERY KIND THANK YOU
GOOD
I THINK WE'RE GOING TO ENJOY GETTING TO KNOW ONE ANOTHER

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Thus Far in Scion

What started with a mysterious sigil led to war. Prince Ethan of the West-ruling Heron Dynasty was graced with a mark granting him power, leading to the accidental scarring of Prince Bron of the East-ruling Raven Dynasty during ritual combat.

When the battle was met, first victory belonged to the Herons, but Ethan's oldest brother and heir to the throne, Arto, was brutally slain by Bron. Ethan swore vengeance.

Not long after, Bron was imbued with power by Mai Shen, who revealed herself to him as a member of the godlike First. Bron then murdered his father, framed his sister Ashleigh for the crime, and took the throne for himself.

Ethan confronted Bron in the Raven Keep but was defeated, managing to escape with his life thanks to Ashleigh's help. The Raven princess was, in fact, part of the Underground movement dedicated to freeing the genetically engineered Lesser Races.

Ethan promised his loyalty to the Underground, much to the chagrin of his brother Kai and sister Ylena, who are leading the Heron invasion.

Accompanied by Ashleigh, his Lesser Races friends Skink and the bounty hunter Exeter, Ethan set out to find a new sanctuary for the Lesser Races. Along the way, Ethan saved a stranger named Nadia from a wyvern attack.

Meanwhile, Mai Shen slew another member of the First, Bernd Rechts, who had been advising the Heron war effort.

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WE ARE WOUNDED
THE WOUND WAS NOT DEEP IT BARELY DREW BLOOD
BUT IT WAS ALLOWED TO FESTER
AS ANY WOUND THAT IS UNTREATED HAS BECOME INFECTED
WHAT BEGAN AS LITTLE MORE THAN A PRICK TO OUR SKIN NOW WORKS ITS WAY TOWARD OUR VERY HEART AND IF THE HEART DIES
SO TOO DOES THE ENTIRE BODY WE DARE NOT IGNORE THIS ILLNESS ANY LONGER
WE MUST ERADICATE THE INFECTION

AND **DESTROY** EVERY HERON UPON OUR SOIL!

YES WE HAVE SUFFERED MUCH

YES WE HAVE LOST BATTLES AND BURIED TOO MANY SONS AND DAUGHTERS IN FIELDS SANCTIFIED BY THEIR BLOOD

YES THE INVADERS TAINT OUR SHORES WITH THEIR PRESENCE AND EVEN NOW MOVE INLAND PLANNING TO PRESS THEIR ADVANTAGE

AND YES YOUR KING AND *FATHER*, IS DEAD AT THE HANDS OF A TREACHEROUS COWARD WHO ESCAPED HER JUST PUNISHMENT THANKS TO THE SCION OF OUR ENEMY

INDEED WE HAVE *SUFFERED* AND I WOULD GRIEVE WERE THERE TIME TO DO SO

I BELIEVED I WOULD BE *YEARS* BEFORE I WOULD BEAR THE TITLE KING BRON BUT THE MANTLE OF RULERSHIP HAS FALLEN TO ME

AND AS YOUR KING I MAKE YOU THIS *PROMISE* IT IS *YOU*

...*ALL* OF YOU

THE VERY FLOWER OF THE RAVEN KINGDOM WHO WILL BRING ABOUT OUR TRIUMPH

EVEN NOW YOUR COMRADES SELL THEIR LIVES DEARLY TO DELAY THE INVADERS THEIR SACRIFICE WILL NOT BE IN VAIN

WE WILL DRIVE OUR ENEMIES FROM OUR LANDS AND PURSUE THEM WE WILL SLAY THEM AND PURGE THEM FROM THE FACE OF THE WORLD

THIS WE DO NOT ONLY FOR THE *GLORY* OF THE KINGDOM BUT TO *PRESERVE* ALL THAT WE ARE

GIVE ME YOUR BLOOD AND YOUR TEARS YOUR STRONG SWORD ARMS AND YOUR NOBLE HEARTS

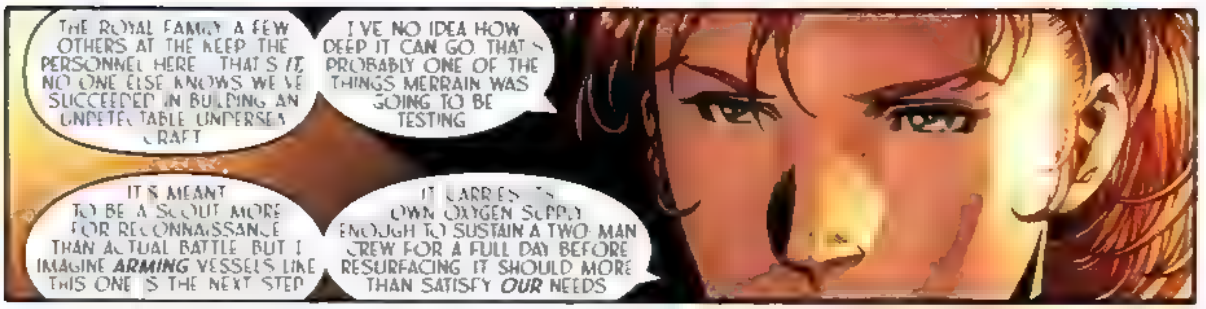
AND I WILL GIVE YOU **VICTORY!**

FEW PEOPLE
AND FEWER STILL KNOW WHAT WE'VE BEEN DOING HERE. BUT I WANT NOTHING LEFT TO CHANCE.
UNDERSTOOD, SIR.
POST GUARDS AT THE DOCKS ROUND THE CLOCK. IF WHAT WE'VE CONSTRICTED PROVES ITSELF DURING TESTING
WE COULD WELL TURN THE TIDE OF THE
DOCTOR MERRAIN
Hm?
WAS HOPING

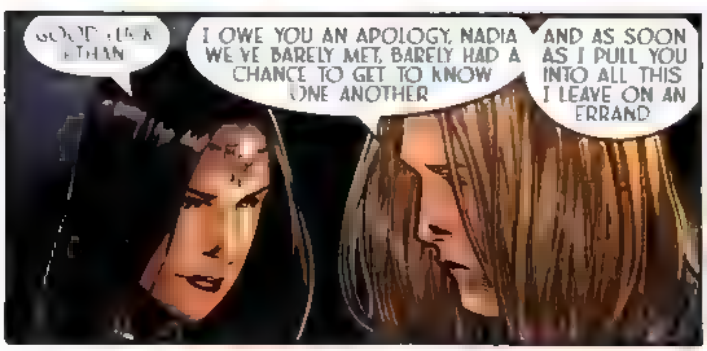
PRINCESS AMALEKITH WHAT
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE? YOUR FATHER'S DEATH, THERE'S A PRI ON YOUR HEAD
DON'T TRUST ERYTHING YOU HEAR MERRAN
I CAN EXPLAIN I WAS VICTIM OF AN INSIDIOUS HERON PLOT
DON'T TRUST HER YOU SAID YOURSELF NOTHING LEFT TO HANCE SIR
WAIT, ATTAIN
BUT SOMETHING'S NOT RIGHT SIR
I THINK HEAR
OF ENOUGH OF THIS
NGH!
GUH!
BASTARD WITCH!

GAAAH!
ASHLEIGH
I TRUST YOU'RE NOT HURT?
I'M JUST FINE ETHAN
YOU WERE ABLE TO OVERCOME THE OTHER GUARDS WITHOUT MUCH TROUBLE?
WE WERE AMONG THEM BEFORE THEY COULD REACT
SOMEBODY MUST HAVE DISTRACTED THEM
YOU HEARD THAT DIDN'T YOU?
COME ON LET'S HAVE A LOOK AT WHAT WE CAME HERE FOR

IT'S BEEN IN DEVELOPMENT FOR MORE THAN A YEAR. ONCE THE WAR BEGAN THE PROJECT WAS ACCELERATED
A GOOD DEAL OF THE RAVEN TREASURY WENT INTO ITS FUNDING. WHICH IS WHY *I'M* AWARE OF IT

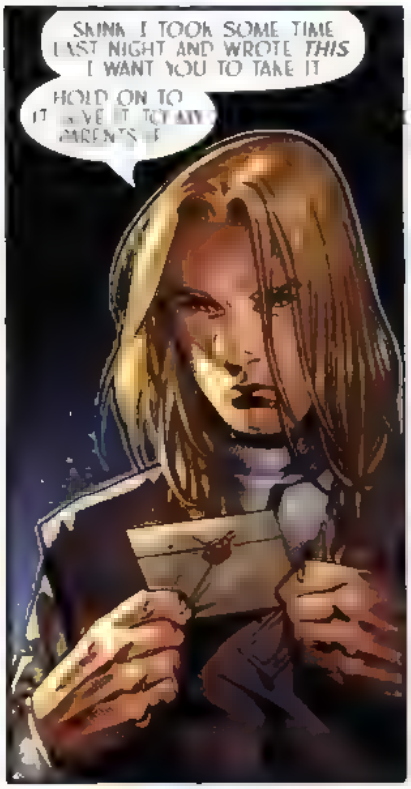

THE ROYAL FAMILY, A FEW OTHERS AT THE KEEP, THE PERSONNEL HERE... THAT'S *IT*. NO ONE ELSE KNOWS WE'VE SUCCEEDED IN BUILDING AN UNDETECTABLE UNDERSEA CRAFT
I'VE NO IDEA HOW DEEP IT CAN GO. THAT'S PROBABLY ONE OF THE THINGS MERRAIN WAS GOING TO BE TESTING
IT'S MEANT TO BE A SCOUT MORE FOR RECONNAISSANCE THAN ACTUAL BATTLE. BUT I IMAGINE ***ARMING*** VESSELS LIKE THIS ONE IS THE NEXT STEP
IT CARRIES ITS OWN OXYGEN SUPPLY ENOUGH TO SUSTAIN A TWO-MAN CREW FOR A FULL DAY BEFORE RESURFACING. IT SHOULD MORE THAN SATISFY ***OUR*** NEEDS

LOOKS A LITTLE CRAMP
IT ***WOULD*** BE IF YOU WERE COMING ALONG, EXETER
ALL RIGHT, YOU ALL KNOW YOUR PARTS IN THIS
WE'LL RENDEZVOUS ON THE COAST IN FIVE DAYS JUST NORTH OF THE INLET AT BORLUN'S ROCK
ASSUMING I'M NOT SETTING OFF IN A BIG METAL ***COFFIN***


GOOD LUCK, ETHAN
I OWE YOU AN APOLOGY, NADIA. WE'VE BARELY MET, BARELY HAD A CHANCE TO GET TO KNOW ONE ANOTHER
AND AS SOON AS I PULL YOU INTO ALL THIS I LEAVE ON AN ERRAND

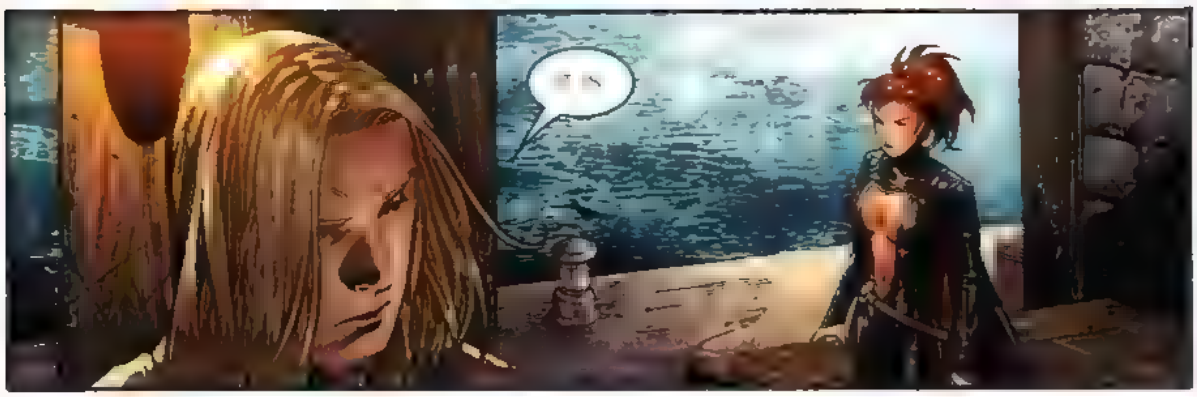
THERE'S NO NEED TO APOLOGIZE TO ME, ETHAN
YOU SAVED MY LIFE. I'M HAPPY TO HELP YOU IN ANY WAY I CAN

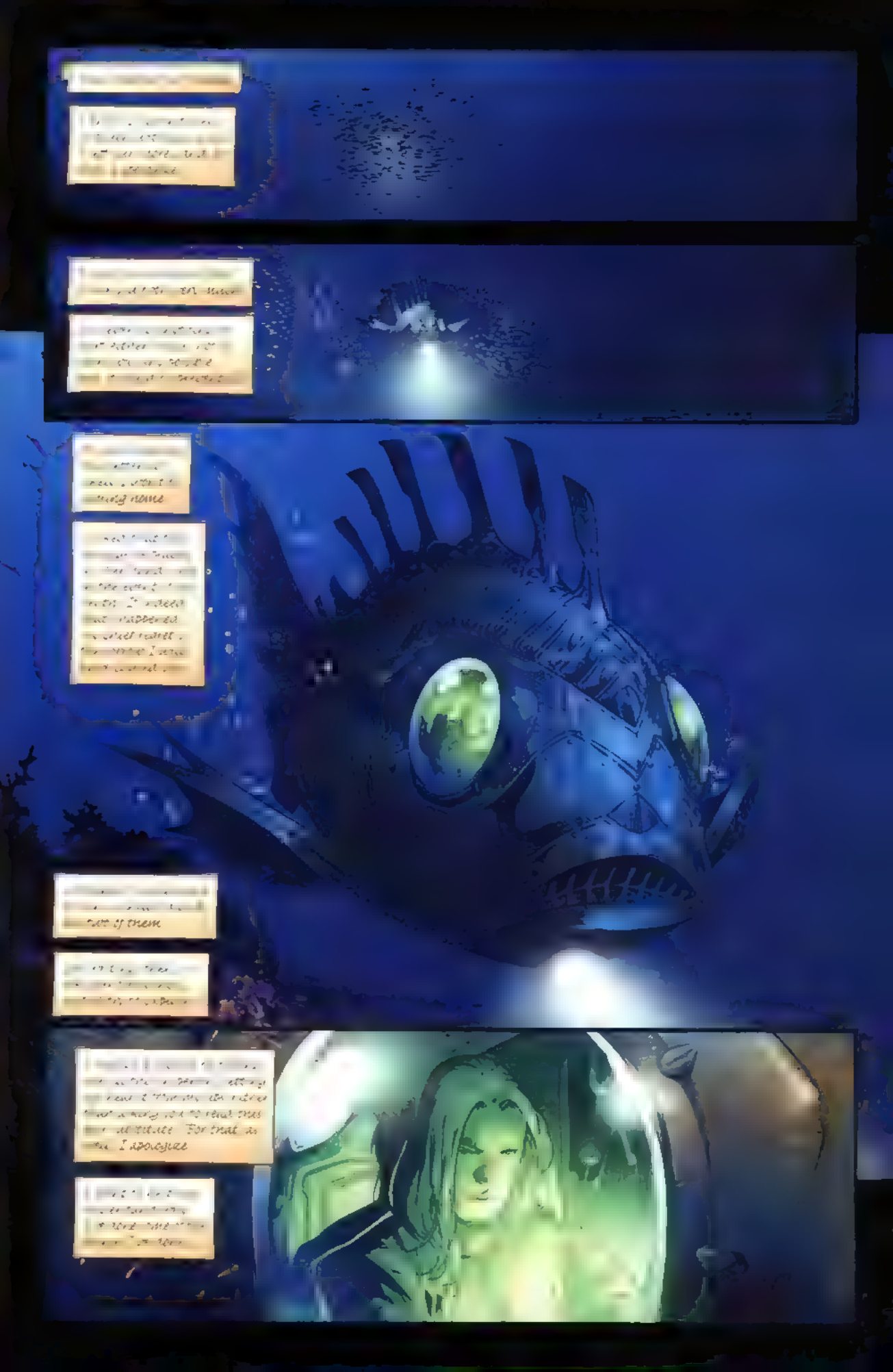
ETHAN
I JUST THINK I SHOULD
THE CRAFT'S ONLY
—ME, BECAUSE IT'S MY PLAN AND I HAVE TO SEE
AND ASHLEIGH
I NEED YOU TO GO WITH PETER AND SEE THAT THE OTHER PART OF THIS IS CARRIED OUT
AND WHILE PETER HASN'T GIVEN US A REASON NOT TO TRUST HIM, BUT I'D FEEL MORE AT EASE IF YOU WERE WITH HIM


SKINN, I TOOK SOME TIME LAST NIGHT AND WROTE THIS I WANT YOU TO TAKE IT
HOLD ON TO IT, GIVE IT TO ANY PARENTS IF

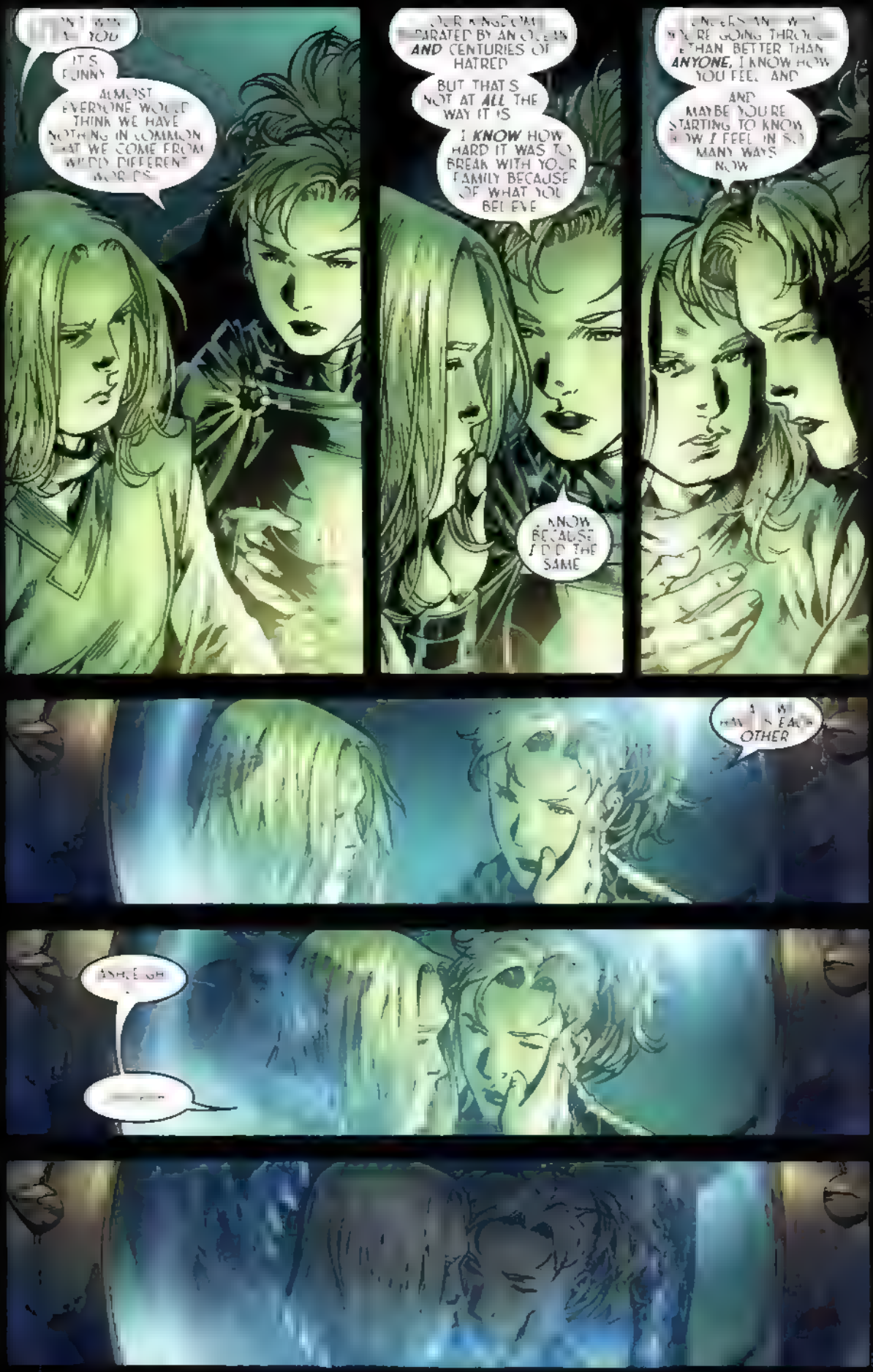
YOU KNOW IF SOMETHING HAPPENS

I UNDERSTAND
BUT I'M SURE YOU'LL BE FINE ETHAN YOU WILL FIND WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR
IF IT'S TRUELY WHAT YOU WANT

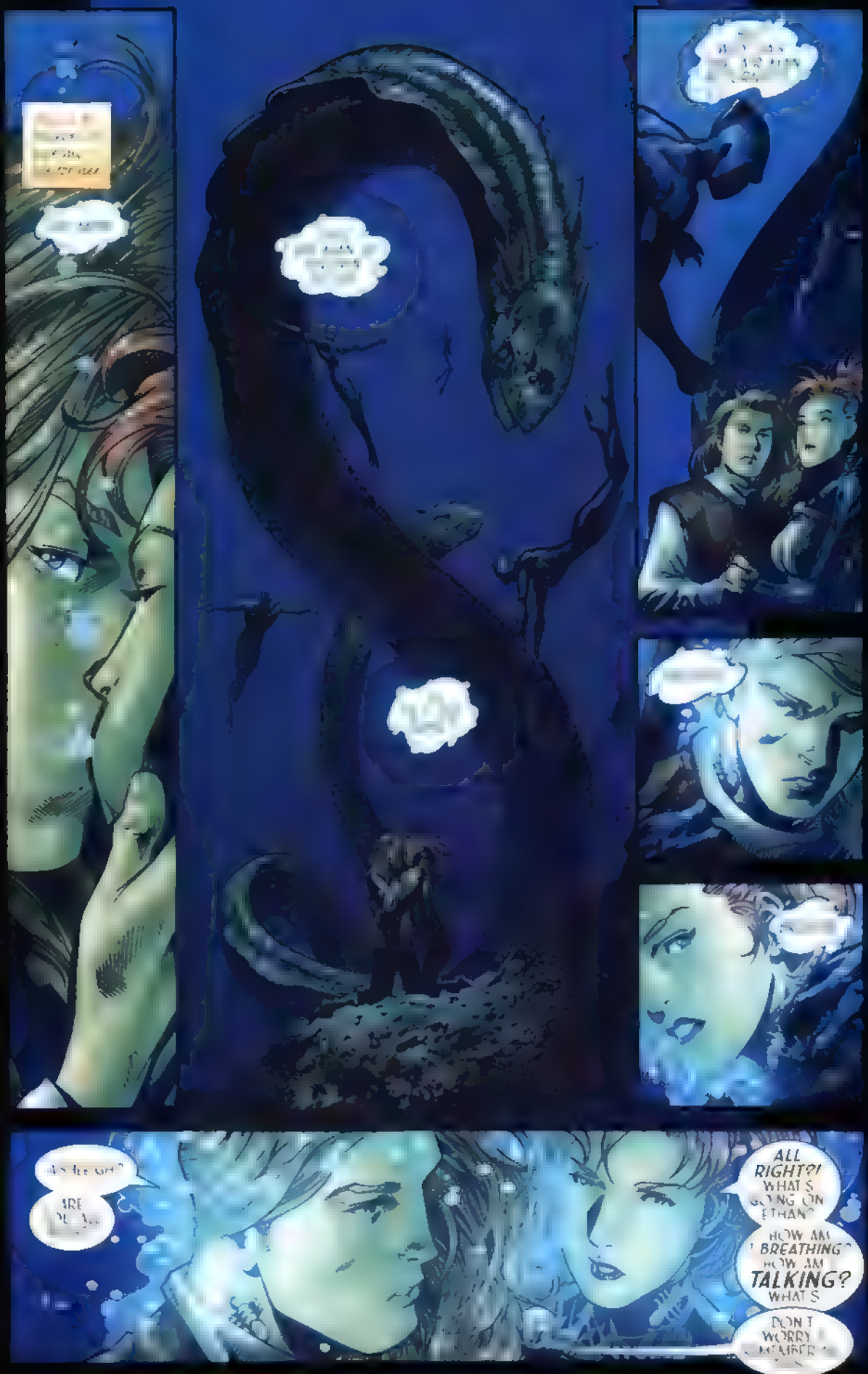

IT IS



I DON'T KNOW
THERE WAS ONLY YOU CAN HIDE A CITY EVEN ON THE OCEAN FLOOR
I DON'T IMAGINE WHEN MY BOAT WAS SWAMPED CROSSING THE GREAT SEA THE SWIMMERS SAVED ME
THEY SPOKE TO ME IN MY HEAD, AND I GOT A GLIMPSE OF THEIR CITY
THEY CALLED IT HAVEN
MORE THAN YOU CAN KNOW BUT IF WE CAN'T FIND
WE CAN'T FIND OTHER PLACES THAT CAN SERVE AS A NEW SANCTUARY FOR
THE SAFEST YOU AGREED
BEFORE WE NEED TO RESURFACE I WON TURN BACK UNTIL
I PROMISED MY LOYALTY TO THE UNDERGROUND I SAID I'D FIND A NEW SANCTUARY FOR THE LESSER RACES
I DON'T WANT TO FAIL THEM


YOU
IT'S FUNNY
ALMOST EVERYONE WOULD THINK WE HAVE NOTHING IN COMMON THAT WE COME FROM WILDLY DIFFERENT WORLDS
AND CENTURIES OF HATRED
BUT THAT'S NOT AT ALL THE WAY IT IS
I KNOW HOW HARD IT WAS TO BREAK WITH YOUR FAMILY BECAUSE OF WHAT YOU BELIEVE
I KNOW BECAUSE I DID THE SAME
ANYONE, I KNOW HOW YOU FEEL AND
AND MAYBE YOU'RE STARTING TO KNOW HOW I FEEL IN SO MANY WAYS NOW
OTHER

WHAT HAPPENED?
WE MUST HAVE HIT SOMETHIN'
US!
THE HULL'S COMPLETELY BREACHED!
THIS SHIP HAS WEAPONS AT ALL
NONE. IT'S ONLY SUPPOSED TO BE A SCOUT!
HANG ON!
WHATEVER IT IS, IT'S BIG AND IT'S COMIN' BACK FOR MORE


ALL RIGHT?! WHAT'S
ETHAN?
HOW AM I BREATHING?
HOW AM I TALKING? WHAT'S
DON'T WORRY

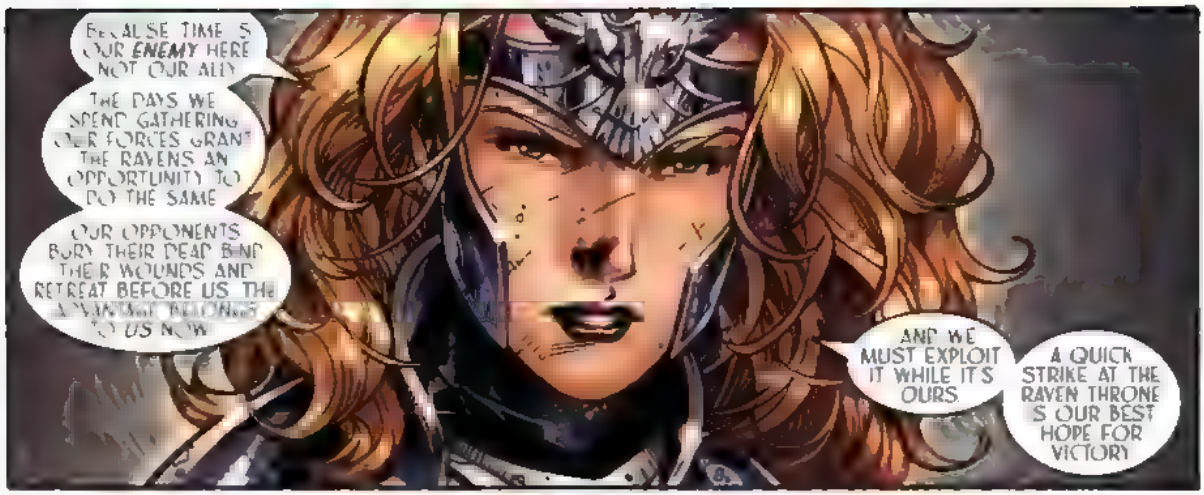
ETHAN I'M NOT SURE I UNDERSTAND

ARE WE PRISONERS? WHERE ARE THEY TAKING US?

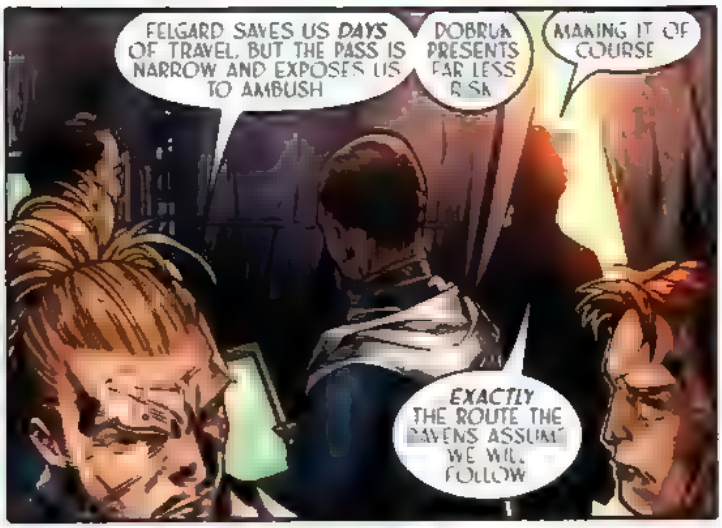
HAVEN

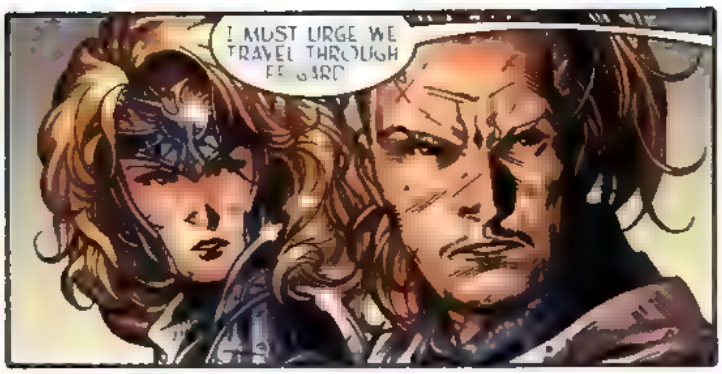
I COMMEND YOU ON THIS LATEST TRIUMPH
AND I COMMAND YOU TO PUT IT FROM YOUR MINDS. WE DEFEATED TOKEN RESISTANCE
WE RE SCARCELY A DAY'S MARCH FROM THE COAST, BUT RATHER THAN RETREATING THE RAVENS RESPONDED WITH A COUNTERATTACK DOOMED TO FAILURE FROM ITS INCEPTION
TO WHAT END, PRINCE HAL? WHAT DOES THE ENEMY THINK TO GAIN FROM SUCH A DESPERATE TACTIC?
THEY ATTEMPT TO DELAY US UNTIL THEY CAN RECOUP THEIR STRENGTH
IT'S MY INTENTION TO ADVANCE WITH ALL SPEED AND TAKE THE RAVEN CAPITAL WHILE THEY ARE UNPREPARED
BUT I WON'T ALLOW IT
WE SHALL PICK THE TIMING AND LOCATION OF THE DECISIVE BATTLE NOT BRON

BUT MY PRINCE ARE WE NOT BETTER SERVED BY WAITING FOR REINFORCEMENTS TO CROSS THE GREAT SEA
RATHER THAN RUSHING INTO ANOTHER BATTLE WITH WHAT REMAINS OF OUR LANDING FORCE?
WE WHO DO WE NOT HALT OUR ADVANCE AND AWAIT OUR COMRADES?
ONCE THEY'VE ARRIVED WE'LL MEET THE RAVENS AT FULL STRENGTH


BECAUSE TIME IS OUR ENEMY HERE NOT OUR ALLY
THE DAYS WE SPEND GATHERING OUR FORCES GRANT THE RAVENS AN OPPORTUNITY TO DO THE SAME
OUR OPPONENTS BURY THEIR DEAD BIND THEIR WOUNDS AND RETREAT BEFORE US THE ADVANTAGE BELONGS TO US NOW
AND WE MUST EXPLOIT IT WHILE IT'S OURS
A QUICK STRIKE AT THE RAVEN THRONE IS OUR BEST HOPE FOR VICTORY

YLENAS SENTIMENTS ECHO MY OWN
WE DEPENDED UPON RECHT'S STRATEGIC ADVICE BUT HE'S GONE MISSING SINCE WE TOOK THE COAST THE DECISION IS MINE
WE STRIKE AT THE RAVEN CAPITOL
NOW
WE MUST CHOOSE THE ROUTE BY WHICH WE'LL ADVANCE
THE LONGER PATH ACROSS THE PLAIN OF DOBRUK OR THE SHORTER, THROUGH THE NOTCH AT FELGARD


FELGARD SAVES US DAYS OF TRAVEL, BUT THE PASS IS NARROW AND EXPOSES US TO AMBUSH
DOBRUK PRESENTS FAR LESS RISK
MAKING IT OF COURSE
EXACTLY THE ROUTE THE RAVENS ASSUME WE WILL FOLLOW


I MUST URGE WE TRAVEL THROUGH FELGARD

FOR IT IS THE UNEXPECTED THAT MOST OFTEN YIELDS THE GREATEST VICTORIES
WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN RECHTS?

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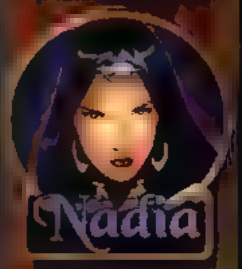
Ethan

Ashleigh

Skink

Bron

Exeter


Nadia

Mai Shen

That started with a mysterious sigil led to war. Prince Ethan of the West-ruling Heron Dynasty was graced with a mark granting him power, leading to the accidental scarring of Prince Bron of the East-ruling Raven Dynasty during ritual combat.

When the battle was met, first victory belonged to the Herons, but Ethan's oldest brother and heir to the throne, Artor, was brutally slain by Bron. Ethan swore vengeance.

Not long after, Bron was imbued with power by Mai Shen, who revealed herself to him as a member of the godlike First. Bron then murdered his father, framed his sister Ashleigh for the crime, and took the throne for himself.

Ethan confronted Bron in the Raven Keep but was defeated, managing to escape with his life thanks to Ashleigh's help. The Raven princess was, in fact, part of the Underground movement dedicated to freeing the genetically-engineered Lesser Races.

Ethan promised his loyalty to the Underground, much to the chagrin of his brother Kai and sister Ylena, who are leading the Heron invasion. Intending to find a new sanctuary for the Lesser Races, Ethan and Ashleigh stole a submersible craft and set off for the undersea city of Haven. Ethan's Lesser Race friends Skink and Exeter, along with a traveler named Nadia, arranged to meet Ethan upon his return.

Meanwhile, Bernd Rechts, a member of the First who had been advising the Heron war effort but was apparently slain by Mai Shen, returned to the Heron encampment. Rechts urged a quick strike at the Raven capital via a dangerous mountain pass.

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FEAR
PREYED UPON
OWN KIND
I WAS THE SPECTER MEANT TO KEEP YOU SO FEARFUL THAT YOU WOULD NEVER DARE THROW OFF YOUR

AND TELL YOU I HAVE CHANGED

EXETER THE BOUNTY HUNTER IS NO MORE. I AM NOW ONE OF *YOU*. A CREATURE OF THE LESSER RACES BORN INTO SLAVERY JUST AS ALL OF YOU WERE

BUT WE NEED NOT *REMAIN* SLAVES

YOU'RE AWARE OF THE UNDERGROUND'S CAUSE - FREEDOM FOR *ALL*, THE PROMISE OF THROWING OFF THE YOKE OF SERVITUDE PLACED UPON US BY THE RAVEN DYNASTY

I COME TO YOU IN THE NAME OF THE UNDERGROUND AND I OFFER YOU *HOPE*

I OFFER YOU *SANCTUARY*

THERE *WAS* A SANCTUARY WE ALL KNEW OF IT AND WE ALL KNOW OF ITS FATE

KING BRON SENT HIS BROTHER TO DESTROY IT EVERYONE WAS *SLAUGHTERED!*

IS *THAT* THE KIND OF HOPE YOU OFFER?

I KNOW WELL WHAT HAPPENED AT THE SANCTUARY I WAS *THERE*

EVERYTHING YOU SAY IS TRUE

BRAVE WARRIORS WERE OVERWHELMED BY THE SHEER NUMBERS OF THEIR OPPONENTS WOMEN AND CHILDREN WERE PUT TO THE SWORD

A *MASSACRE* INDEED

THE *HORROR* OF IT ORDERED ME TO CONFRONT WHAT I WAS AND TO BECOME SOMETHING BETTER

YOU CAN FEAR THE RAVENS FOR WHAT THEY HAVE DONE FOR THE HARSH LESSON THEY BESTOWED UPON YOUR BRETHREN

NO ONE WOULD BLAME YOU IT IS AFTER ALL WHAT THE RAVENS *WANT* YOU TO DO

OR DO AS I DO VIEW THE TRAGEDY NOT AS REASON TO COWER

BUT AS REASON TO LOOK WITHIN YOURSELF AND FIND THE STRENGTH OF *DEFIANCE*

OF *REBELLION*

AYE! WELL SAID!

BE EASY, OR THAT LIVES WILL NOT BE LOST
ANYTHING WORTH HAVING COMES WITH ITS PRICE
BUT WE ARE NOT ALONE
IN THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF WHAT WE MUST DO
WE HAVE POWERFUL ALLIES A PRINCESS OF THE RAVEN DYNASTY AND A PRINCE OF THE HERON DYNASTY AID US
EVEN NOW, AS I GATHER YOUR SUPPORT, THEY SEARCH FOR A NEW SANCTUARY FOR A PLACE WHERE WE WILL BE SAFE
AND FREE
PREPARED WHEN CALL COMES
NEVER
ETHAN AND ASHLEIGH CERTAINLY BELIEVE IT TO BE SO NADIA TO HAVE UNDERTAKEN SUCH A PERILOUS JOURNEY
I WISH I'D
ALWAYS BEEN ABOUT THAN LEARNING TO STAND ON ITS OWN

ETHAN I STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND ANY OF THIS
HOW WE'RE EVEN *BREATHING* OR *TALKING* WHEN THE SWIMMERS SPEAK TO US IT'S LIKE BELLS RINGING INSIDE MY HEAD
WE'VE BEEN THE SAME THING THE FIRST TIME THEY SAVED ME FROM DROWNING SOMETHING TO DO WITH THOSE *THINGS* THEY ATTACHED TO OUR NECKS
I DON'T KNOW *HOW* IT WORKS JUST THAT IT *DOES*
DO YOU KNOW WHERE THEY'RE TAKING US?
I'M NOT SURE BUT FROM THE WAY THEY'RE TREATING US I DON'T THINK WE'RE GOING SIGHTSEEING

THIS IS *AMAZING*

I DON'T THINK THAT EVEN *BEGINS* TO DESCRIBE IT

THE CREATURE WE DIDN'T KNOW IT WAS *YOURS*. IT ATTACKED AND WE HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO DEFEND OURSELVES

WE'RE SORRY

I OWE YOU MY GRATITUDE FOR SAVING ME *AGAIN*

I'M *ETHAN*, PRINCE OF THE HERON DYNASTY

THIS IS *ASHLEIGH* SHE'S A PRINCESS OF THE RAVEN DYNASTY

MY THANKS AS WELL

WE'RE NOT HERE ACCIDENTALLY

WE SOUGHT YOU OUT BECAUSE WE'VE COME TO ASK A BOON OF YOU

WE'RE PART OF THE SURFACE UNDERGROUND MOVEMENT
THE LESSER RACES LIVE AS LITTLE MORE THAN SERVANTS IN THE WEST AND SLAVES IN THE EAST
THE UNDERGROUND'S GOAL IS TO SEE THAT ALL THE LESSER RACES LIVE FREELY
WE'RE SEARCHING FOR A PLACE THAT CAN HAPPEN
IT WAS ONCE A HIDDEN SANCTUARY BUT IT WAS DESTROYED EVERYONE WHO HAD TAKEN REFUGE THERE
IN DOING SO MANY OF THE UNDERGROUND'S LEADERS WAS SLAIN
I AM ASHAMED TO ADMIT ONE OF MY BROTHERS COMMANDED IT AND THE OTHER ARRED OUT AFRO
WHAT WE WISH
WHAT WE HOPE
IS THAT SINCE THE SURFACE WORLD HAS TURNED ITS BACK ON THE LESSER RACES, THE LESSER RACES MIGHT BE ABLE TO DO THE SAME TO THE SURFACE WORLD
WE'VE COME TO ASK IF THE LESSER RACES MIGHT FIND A PLACE TO LIVE HERE, A LITERAL HAVEN

BECAUSE IT'S THE RIGHT THING TO DO. BECAUSE WE HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO DO IT
WE'VE LEARNED NOT TO JUDGE THE LESSER RACES ONLY BY WHAT THEY ARE. DON'T JUDGE US SIMPLY BECAUSE WE'RE HUMAN
OR BECAUSE OF WHAT FAMILIES WE COME FROM
OUR MOTIVES IN GENUINE. BUT WE CAN'T ACCOMPLISH THIS WITHOUT YOUR HELP
PLEASE

WE
YOU OF ALL BEINGS WOULD UNDERSTAND
WE JUST WANT THE LESSER RACES TO HAVE THE PEACE YOU ALREADY HAVE THE FREEDOM THEY DESERVE
WHERE ELSE CAN WE
WE
IS
BUT WE NEED RESOURCES
SAVE

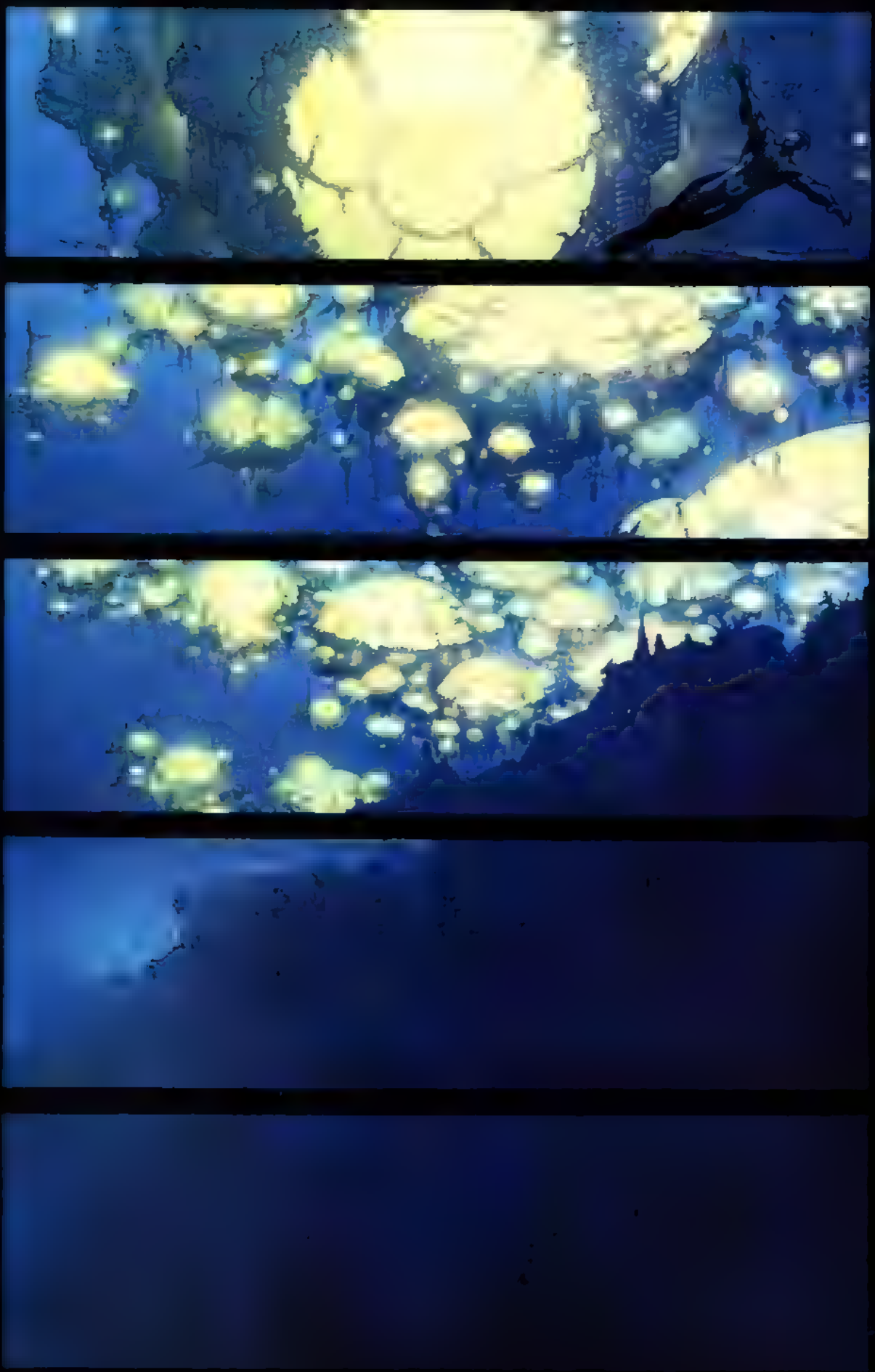
DESTROYED?

I REALLY THOUGHT HAVEN WAS THE ANSWER NOW I CAN SEE THAT WAS
I'M SORRY I FAILED YOU
ETHAN

THERE'S NOTHING TO APOLOGIZE FOR DON'T BLAME YOU
WE TRIED NOW WE KNOW THIS ISN'T THE ANSWER
WE'LL FIND ANOTHER ONE
WHEN WE WERE ON THE SUBMARINE SOMETHING WAS GOING TO HAPPEN
AND THE KISS WE SHARED UNDERWATER I KNOW YOU WERE SAVING MY LIFE
BUT IS THAT ALL YOU HAD IN MIND?
I DON'T MEAN TO TAKE ADVANTAGE YOU HAVE TO BELIEVE THAT
I WAS CAUGHT UP IN THE MOMENT PLEASE DON'T THINK WORSE OF ME
NO I MEAN
NO
I'M NOT SAYING I MINDED IT THAT'S NOT WHAT I'M SAYING AT ALL
WE'VE KNOWN EACH OTHER LONG ENOUGH THAT WE SHOULD BE HONEST WITH EACH OTHER BUT WE'RE NOT
IT'S BEEN RIGHT THERE UNDER THE SURFACE ALMOST SINCE THE FIRST TIME WE SAW EACH OTHER AND WE BOTH PRETEND IT ISN'T
NEITHER OF US HAS THE COURAGE TO ACT ON WHAT'S SO OBVIOUS WHY ARE WE SO SCARED TO ADMIT

ARE ABOUT YOU
VERY MUCH BUT I DON'T KNOW HOW WE CAN EVER BE TOGETHER OUR KINGDOMS ARE AT WAR, OUR FAMILIES
BEFORE
ALL WE HAVE IS EACH OTHER

ARE YOU SURE THIS IS WHAT YOU WANT?



JUST WHAT WE NEEDED
SNOW
AS IF CUTTING THROUGH THE FELGARD NOTCH WASN'T *ENOUGH* OF A RISK
NOW WE'RE WADING THROUGH A FRESH SNOWFALL
I BEGIN TO DOUBT THE WISDOM OF YOUR ADVICE EVEN *MORE*, RECHTS
YOU AGREED THIS WAS THE *QUICKER* ROUTE TO THE RAVEN CAPITAL, RATHER THAN ACROSS THE PLAINS, PRINCE KAI
OUR ENEMY WILL NEVER EXPECT SUCH A BOLD ADVANCE *SURPRISE* WILL BE OURS
IT *HAS* TO BE

SINCE THIS INVASION FORCE IS OUR BEST HOPE OF *ENDING* THE CONFLICT IN OUR FAVOR

PERHAPS OUR *ONLY* HOPE

YOU LEAD AN IMPRESSIVE ARMY PRINCESS XENA

I ASSURE YOU, THE END OF THE WAR IS VERY NEAR INDEED

I'D FEEL A GOOD DEAL MORE CERTAIN OF OUR SUCCESS IF WE HAD ETHAN *AND* HIS POWER AT OUR SIDE

INSTEAD HE'S OFF WITH THAT RAVEN WITCH OF HIS PROVING HIS *IDEALISM*

YES, YOUR BROTHER PURSUES HIS OWN COURSE RATHER THAN THE ONE EXPECTED OF HIM

AND YES HIS ABILITIES WOULD BE A BOON BUT ETHAN IS NOT A *NECESSITY* TO VICTORY

PARTICULARLY WHEN OUR SCOUTS STILL DETECT NO SIGN OF RAVEN OPPOSITION

LET'S HOPE IT *REMAINS* SO UNTIL WE REACH THE CAPITAL

I DON'T WANT BROK TO KNOW WE'RE ANYWHERE *NEAR* UNTIL WE KNOCK ON HIS DOOR

OH, I'M SURE EVERYTHING WILL WORK OUT JUST AS PLANNED

MOST OF THE HERON FORCE S IN THE NOTCH NOW
THEY LL BE WITHIN RANGE SOON
LET THEM COME TO US, KORT THE HOLOGRAM GENERATORS WILL MASK OUR PRESENCE UNTIL IT S FAR TOO LATE
MAI SHEN HAS BEEN NOTICEABLY ABSENT FROM YOUR SIDE OF LATE BRON
SHE S SUPPOSED TO BE OUR WAR ADVISOR, SHOULDN T SHE AT LEAST BE HERE FOR THE ATTACK?
NOT TO
SHE'S HERE

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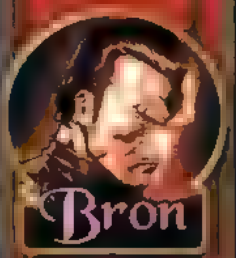
Thus Far in Scion



What started with a mysterious sigil led to war. Prince Ethan of the West-ruling Heron Dynasty was graced with a mark granting him power, leading to the accidental scarring of Prince Bron of the East-ruling Raven Dynasty during ritual combat.

When the battle was met, first victory belonged to the Herons, but Ethan's oldest brother and heir to the throne, Artor, was brutally slain by Bron. Ethan swore vengeance.

Not long after, Bron was imbued with power by Mai Shen, who revealed herself to him as a member of the godlike First. Bron then murdered his father, framed his sister Ashleigh for the crime, and took the throne for himself.

Ethan confronted Bron in the Raven Keep but was defeated, managing to escape with his life thanks to Ashleigh's help. The Raven princess was, in fact, part of the Underground movement dedicated to freeing the genetically engineered Lesser Races.

Ethan promised his loyalty to the Underground, much to the chagrin of his brother Kai and sister Ylena, who lead the Heron invasion. Intending to find a new home for the Lesser Races, Ethan and Ashleigh voyaged to the undersea city of Haven but were disappointed when their pleas for sanctuary were refused. While still in Haven, Ethan and Ashleigh finally give in to their mutual attraction.

Meanwhile, Kai and Ylena led their invasion force into a narrow pass, unaware the Raven army waited in ambush.

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THAN IS THE
YOUNGEST
PRINCE OF
THE
MUTUAL HATRED
BOILING OVER
INTO A WAR THAT
LASTED CENTURIES
FINALLY A TENUOUS
PEACE WAS STRUCK
AND OPEN
WAS REPLACED
BY AN ANNUAL
VIOLATED
OF THE EAST, THE
INTENTIONAL
ARM HAD
WITH THE
YOU SAW
HE WAS
CONTROL THE

BUT COULDN'T PREVENT THE DEATH OF HIS ELDEST BROTHER *ARTOR* AT BRON'S HANDS
ETHAN VOWED HE'D EXACT VENGEANCE FROM BRON AND JOURNEYED BACK TO RAVEN LANDS
BUT BY THAT TIME BRON HAD SECRETLY *SLAIN* HIS FATHER AND TAKEN THE OBSIDIAN THRONE FOR HIMSELF
EVEN MORE BRON *ALSO* HAD BEEN GRANTED A MEASURE OF POWER SIMILAR TO ETHAN'S
ETHAN WASN'T PREPARED FOR BRON'S NEWFOUND MIGHT WHEN HE CONFRONTED HIM HE BARELY ESCAPED WITH HIS LIFE AND ONLY *THEN* WITH ASHLEIGH'S HELP
SHE'S BRON'S SISTER IF YOU HADN'T REALIZED ALREADY. BUT *BLOOD* IS PROBABLY THE ONLY TRAIT THEY SHARE
AS ASHLEIGH'S CHIEF CONCERN IS THE LESSER RACES SHE'S PART OF THE UNDERGROUND WHICH IS INTENT UPON OBTAINING *FREEDOM* FOR THE LESSER RACES
NOW ETHAN HAS PLEDGED HIS LOYALTY TO THE UNDERGROUND AS WELL DESPITE THE PULL HE FEELS FOR HIS FAMILY'S PLIGHT
THAT'S WHAT HE AND ASHLEIGH ARE TRYING TO DO NOW FIND A NEW *SANCTUARY* FOR THE UNDERGROUND
SOMEWHERE THE LESSER RACES CAN BE FREE AND SAFE
AND WHAT ABOUT *YOU*, SKINK?
YOU TALK ABOUT ETHAN, BUT YOU NEVER SAY MUCH ABOUT YOURSELF
THERE'S NOT MUCH TO SAY, NIDRA
JUST TRY TO LOOK OUT FOR HIM
IN *HIM*?

EXETER?
HE WAS A BOUNTY HUNTER THE MOST FEARED IN RAVEN OR HERON LANDS. HE'D NEVER FAILED TO BRING IN A MARK
UNTIL ETHAN DEFEATED HIM AND SHOWED HIM MERCY. EXETER'S SINCE HAD A CHANGE OF HEART AND TAKEN UP THE UNDERGROUND'S CAUSE
AN INTERESTING CHOICE TO RECRUIT SUPPORT FOR THE UNDERGROUND
I IMAGINE ETHAN THINKS IF OTHERS SEE EXETER BELIEVING IN FREEDOM, THEY MIGHT ALLOW THEMSELVES TO BELIEVE IN IT AS WELL
SKINK. THE UNDERGROUND WANTS FREEDOM FOR THE LESSER RACES. YET YOU'RE STILL ETHAN'S SERVANT.
WHY IS THAT?
ETHAN TREATS ME AS AN EQUAL. HE ALWAYS HAS.
I SERVE HIM OUT OF THE OBLIGATION OF FRIENDSHIP, NOT SERVITUDE.
WHICH IS WHY WE WAIT HERE FOR HIS RETURN.
THERE'S BEEN LITTLE TIME TO GET ACQUAINTED SINCE YOU JOINED US, NADIA. YOU'VE SHARED ALMOST NOTHING OF YOURSELF.
YOU'VE ONLY SAID YOU WERE A TRAVELER. WHERE DO YOU HAIL FROM?
I WANTED TO SEE WHAT ELSE AVALON OFFERED.
NOW I FIND MYSELF IN A LAND TORN BY WAR.
THE INVASION CONTINUES EVEN AS WE SIT HERE. ETHAN'S BROTHER AND SISTER LEAD THEIR TROOPS TOWARD THE RAVEN CAPITAL.
THE COMING BATTLE MAY WELL DECIDE THIS WAR'S OUTCOME.

NO PRISONERS!

WHEN WE LEAVE THE FIELD THIS DAY
GYAH
I WANT NOT A SINGLE
BROTHER!
GHLK!

BROTHER WE'VE TAKEN THEM UTTERLY BY SURPRISE!
YOU SEEM OVERLY PLEASED KORT VICTORY IS NOT YET OURS
BUT IT WILL BE! THE HERONS WILL BE WIPED FROM EASTERN SOIL
TAKING THEM HERE IN THE NOTCH MADE THEM EASY PREY LIKE CATCHING THEM BETWEEN THE JAWS OF A GREAT VICE
HOW DID YOU KNOW BRON? HOW DID YOU KNOW THEY'D RISK THIS ROUTE?
I KNEW THAT'S ENOUGH
BUT I WON'T BE SATISFIED UNTIL I FIND THE HERON ROYALS. THEY'RE HERE SOMEWHERE
AND THEY WON'T ESCAPE ME

HARGH!

SHH.

FOR KING AND COUNTRY

RALLY TO THE FLAG!

RALLY TO THE FLAG!

UHUK!

WHERE'S RECHTS?

WHERE IS ANYONE IN THIS CHAOS SCENA?

I DAMN MYSELF FOR EVER LISTENING TO OAL AND DAMN HIM FOR LEADING US INTO THIS AMBUSH!

I DON'T KNOW IF ANY OF US WILL BE GETTING OUT OF IT!

YAA!

PRINCE KAI!
THE BATTLE QUICKLY TURNS INTO CHAOS! WE MUST FLEE AND REGROUP!
REGROUP?
REGROUP WHAT?
MY SOLDIERS ARE SCATTERED FROM ONE END OF THE NOTCH TO THE OTHER! WE'RE BEING SLAUGHTERED!
MERE COINCIDENCE
AND THE FRESH SNOWFALL ONLY WORSENS OUR PREDICAMENT. I BLAME MYSELF
YOU MUST CALL THE RETREAT MY PRINCE
ONLY WAY TO SALVAGE THE DAY
YOU'RE NOT RUNNING AWAY FROM THIS FIGHT!
WE'RE GOING TO DIE HERE TODAY! NOT STAND AND
THUK
AGFF!

KAI!
HURTS LIKE HELL
BUT I'D RATHER HAVE IT STICKING OUT OF MY SHOULDER THAN MY THROAT
AAAHH!
I WAS HOPING TO FIND AT LEAST ONE OF YOU HERON WHELPS AMIDST ALL THIS CARNAGE

BUT FORTUNE INDEED SMILES UPON ME TO STUMBLE ACROSS BOTH OF YOU
ONCE I'M DONE WITH YOU TWO ALL I NEED DO IS SEEK OUT THE YOUNGEST
I'VE SPECIAL ATTENTIONS PLANNED FOR HIM AND MY TURNCOAT SISTER
CHANG
I'D HOPED TO FIND YOU AS WE
FORTUNE SMILES UPON BOTH OF US BRON

TRULY?
WNF!
I'VE ALREADY PROVEN MYSELF ETHAN'S BETTER
I'M CERTAIN'S YOURS
YOU'RE CHANGED SOMEHOW BROM
YOU'RE THE SAME EVIL F_TH WHO MURDERED HIS OWN FATHER
SNAP-T
AND YOU!
KRANG

GHH!
CHANK
SHING
KNCH
NG!

UFF!
I SEEM TO BE MAKING A HABIT OF KILLING HERON PRINCES
WERE I YOU
I'D BE WORRYING ABOUT

KAI!
MY AR- YOU ALL RIGHT?!
I SHOULD BE ASKING YOU!
→NGH←
THE SAME
MY HEAD FEELS LIKE IT'S ABOUT TO SPLIT BUT I LIVE
WHICH IS MORE THAN I CAN SAY FOR HIM
OUR BROTHER RESTS PEACEFULLY NOW THAT HE'S BEEN AVENGED XENA
I'M JUST HOPING WE DON'T JOIN HIM
ANY CHANCE OF AN ORDERLY RETREAT IS GONE WE'RE ONLY MANAGING TOKEN RESISTANCE AT THIS POINT
WE'LL SLIP AWAY AND TRY TO FIND OTHER SURVIVORS THEN HEAD FOR THE COAST
MAYBE WE CAN STILL SALVAGE SOMETHING FROM THIS DISASTER

NNF
NNNGGH
GAAAH!
UH
THAT LOOKED LIKE IT HURT

BUT I AM NOT NEARLY READY FOR YOU TO BE DEAD
VERY NICE TO SEE YOU AS WE MAY SHEN
I WONDERED WHEN YOU D SHOW YOURSELF
I THINK YOU KNOW I VE BEEN HERE
THE BATTLE S BECOME A ROUT ANY HERONS LEFT ALIVE ARE FAR MORE INTERESTED IN FLEEING THAN CONTINUING THE FIGHT
INCLUDING THE TWO I MOST WANTED DEAD
AAI AND YLENA ESCAPED
YOU RE LUCKY TO BE ALIVE BRON
YOU WOULDN T BE WITHOUT WHAT I GAVE YOU I VE MADE YOU FAR MORE THAN HUMAN
YOU LL HEAL TO FIGHT ANOTHER DAY
LET THE ROYALS ESCAPE
KING DANE S ALREADY LOST ONE CHILD DO YOU THINK HE LL SPARE ANY EFFORT ASSURING THE SAFETY OF HIS OTHER CHILDREN?
IF HE BELIEVES THERE S A CHANCE OF RESCUING THEM AND OF COUNTERING THE ADVANTAGE WE VE GAINED TODAY HE LL DEVOTE MOST OF THE HERON MILITARY TO IT
WE LL BE ABLE TO DRAW THEM INTO A DECISIVE BATTLE
AND WE LL WIN IT!

THERE
YOU SEE, SKINK
YOUR CONCERN WAS
UNNECESSARY
ETHAN'S
FINE

BOTH
ALL WITHOUT THE SWIMMERS
THEY FERRIED US TO SHORE IN AN UNDERWATER RAFT. THEY HAVE AN ENTIRE FLEET
WHAT WAS THEIR ANSWER?
WILL HELP

THEY SAID NO
HAVEN IS TOO FRAGILE AN ENVIRONMENT FOR THE SWIMMERS TO CONSIDER TAKING IN REFUGEES
THEY'RE WILLING TO AID THE UNDERGROUND'S CAUSE BUT THEY CAN'T PROVIDE US WITH A SANCTUARY
OUR OWN ASK WAS A SUCCESS, ETHAN THE UNDERGROUND HAS THE SUPPORT OF THE EASTERN LESSER RACES
MANY WILL RISE UP WHEN THE TIME COMES BUT WITHOUT A SANCTUARY FOR THEM
WHAT DO WE DO NOW
ASHER AND I HAVE DISCUSSED A PLAN PERHAPS NOT THE BEST ONE BUT THE ONLY ONE LEFT OPEN TO US
THERE IS NO PLACE FOR US IN RAVEN OR HERON LANDS
SO WE'VE NO CHOICE BUT TO MAKE OUR SANCTUARY IN A PLACE THAT BELONGS TO NEITHER KINGDOM
WE'RE GOING TO TAKE THE TOURNAMENT ISLE FOR OUR OWN

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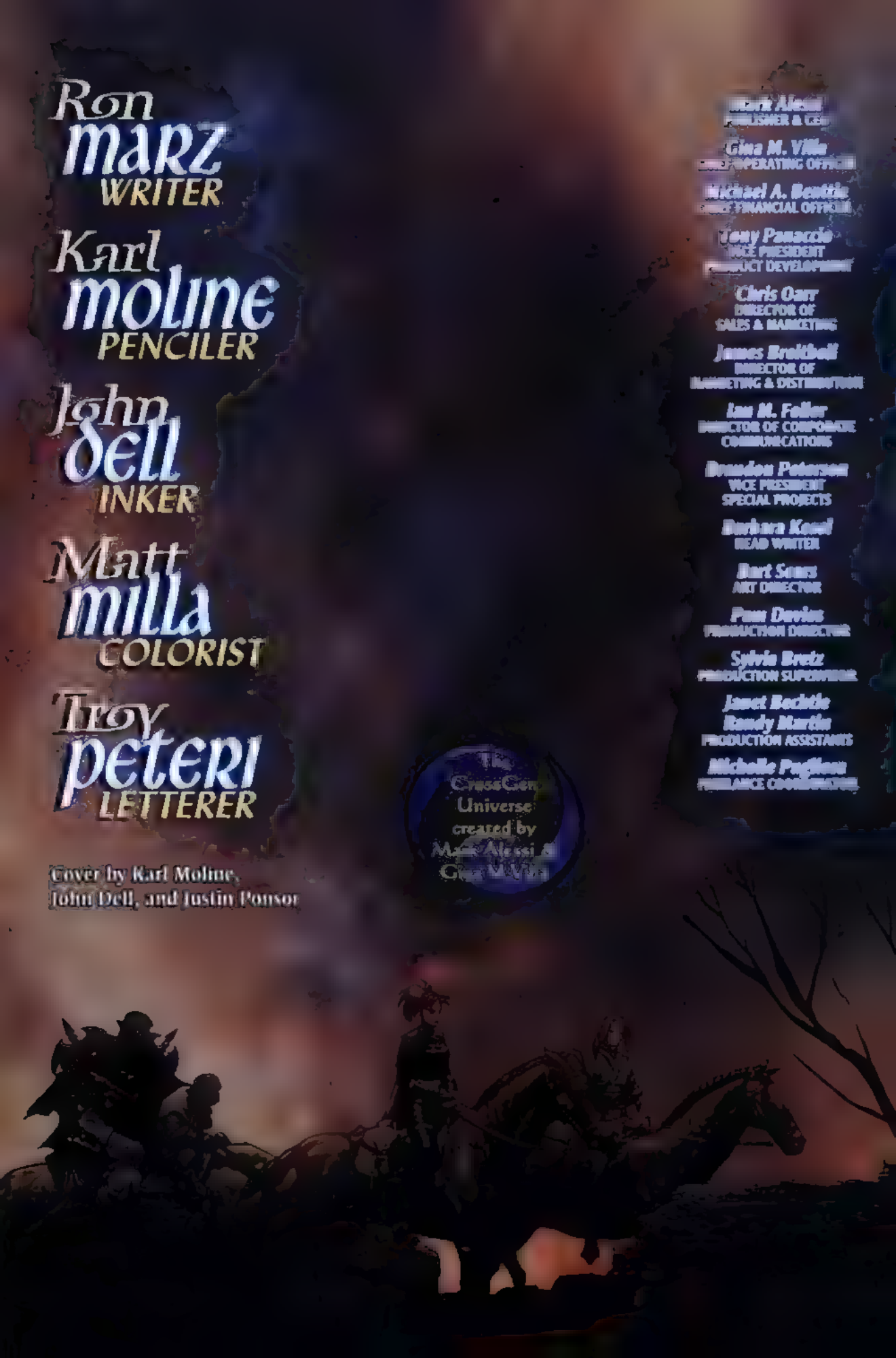

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Thus Far in Scion

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Ethan promised his loyalty to the Underground, much to the chagrin of his brother Kai and sister Ylena, who lead the Heron invasion. Ethan and Ashleigh's voyage to the undersea city of Haven in search of a sanctuary for the Lesser Races ended in disappointment. While still in Haven, however, Ethan and Ashleigh gave in to their mutual attraction. Upon their return to the surface, Ethan made plans to take the Tournament Isle as their sanctuary.

Meanwhile, the Heron invasion force was destroyed in an ambush led by Bron. Kai and Ylena barely escaped with their lives.

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SIRE!
SIRE!

NEWS?

A BATTLEFIELD TRANSMISSION HAS BEEN RECEIVED FROM THE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE, SIRE
A GREAT DEAL OF THE MESSAGE WAS *GARBLED*, BUT WE'VE RECONSTRUCTED AS MUCH OF IT AS WE COULD
IT'S *NOT* GOOD.

DANE?
THE RAVENS WERE WAITING IN AMBUSH WHEN THE EXPEDITIONARY FORCE PASSED THROUGH THE FELGARD NOTCH
IT WAS A *MASSACRE*
THOSE FEW WHO WEREN'T *BUTCHERED* FLED ALONE OR IN SMALL GROUPS

MARIELLA, THERE'S *NO SIGN* OF KAI OR YLENA

IT'S TIME THIS WAR'S FATE WAS *DECIDED*.
READY EVERY SHIP IN THE FLEET AND HAVE MY ARMOR AND WEAPONS MOVED TO THE FLAGSHIP.
WE *LAUNCH* BEFORE DAY'S END.
I'LL EITHER *RESCUE* MY CHILDREN
...OR *AVENGE* THEM

I'M GOING TO BE SICK

AGAIN

I SWEAR EVERY TIME YOU COOK I SPEND THE REST OF THE NIGHT DOUBLED OVER IN PAIN

WE SHOULD BE FEEDING THIS SLOP TO THE ONES WE'VE GOT LOCKED UP

WE FEED *THEM* WORSE SLOP

AND YOU'RE WELCOME TO COOK ANYTIME YOU'RE SORRY NOT YOU CAN DO BETTER

THUMP

YOU EXPECTING ANYONE?

NOT ME *YOU* GET IT

I'M NOT GETTING IT I'M *EATING*

YOU DIDN'T EVEN *START* EATING *YOU* GET IT

ALL RIGHT ALL RIGHT

MAYBE THE SUPPLY SHIPS ARRIVED EARLY

WHERE DID YOU COME FROM? WHAT DO YOU—
!GRH!

INTRUDER!
TAKE THEM!
GHAA!
IS THAT THE PRINCESS?

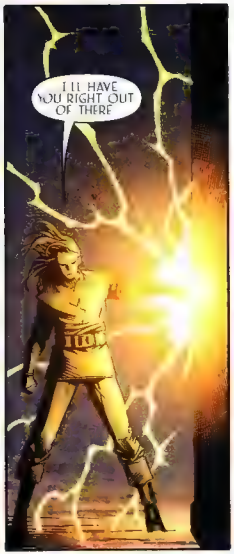
AH!
SHUK
NH!
WHO'S IN COMMAND HERE?!
I AM!
CHANG
THEN YOU HAVE A CHOICE TO MAKE
GHH?!
SHING

YOU CAN SURRENDER OR YOU CAN DIE
EITHER OPTION IS FINE WITH ME
I DON'T THINK YOUR MEN ARE LIKELY TO LAST VERY LONG
...BUT I CAN PROMISE YOU WON'T BE AROUND TO FIND OUT
WELL?
SURRENDER
SURRENDER!
DROP YOUR WEAPONS!
GOOD CHOICE
WHAT DO YOU WANT?
WHY DID YOU COME HERE, HERON?
JUST BE THANKFUL YOU'RE ALIVE AND STOP ASKING QUESTIONS

LOOKS LIKE YOU PICKED UP A SCRATCH, EXETER
IT'S NOTHING

PRINCE ETHAN!
IT IS YOU, IS IT NOT?

IT IS
YOU ARE THE HERON GARRISON FOR THE ISLAND?
AYE, SIR. WHAT'S LEFT OF US
WHEN THE WAR BROKE OUT THE RAVENS ATTACKED AND IMPRISONED THOSE OF US WHO SURVIVED
STAND BACK


I'LL HAVE YOU RIGHT OUT OF THERE

A MIRACULOUS DISPLAY, SIRE. WE ARE GRATEFUL.
WE'VE BEEN LOCKED AWAY AND TREATED LIKE DOGS
IT'S YOUR KINGDOM THAT IS GRATEFUL. YOU'VE DONE YOUR DUTY WITH HONOR, ALL OF YOU.

OUR CAPTORS NEVER SHARED NEWS OF THE WAR, MY PRINCE
DOES THE CONFLICT FAVOR US?
I'M NOT REALLY SURE
NOT SURE, MY PRINCE?
WELL, AT LEAST THE TOURNAMENT ISLE IS OURS, AND THE RAVENS NOW OUR PRISONERS
NO, I'M AFRAID YOU'LL HAVE TO LEAVE THE ISLAND AS WELL
I'M NOT SURE WE UNDERSTAND, SIRE
IT'S OUR DUTY TO SERVE OUR KINGDOM'S CAUSE. WE HAVE NO WISH TO BE RELIEVED
YOU DO MISUNDERSTAND. YOU'RE NOT BEING RELIEVED
I'VE COME TO THE TOURNAMENT ISLE FOR REASONS HAVING NOTHING TO DO WITH THE WAR.
I'VE COME TO CLAIM THE ISLAND AS A SANCTUARY FOR THE UNDERGROUND.
SO THE LESSER RACES HAVE A PLACE THEY CAN BE FREE.

BUT
YOU CAN'T BE SERIOUS, PRINCE ETHAN WE ARE AT WAR
YOUR KINGDOM NEEDS YOU. YOUR FATHER NEEDS YOU. NOW MORE THAN EVER
I'M SORRY I'VE MADE MY DECISION
THIS ISLAND NOW BELONGS TO THE LESSER RACES, AND YOU'RE NO LONGER WELCOME HERE
YOU AND YOUR MEN WILL BE SENT FROM THE ISLAND BY BOAT.
YOU SHOULD REACH HERON SHORES WITHIN A DAY, LESS IF THE WEATHER'S WITH YOU
I CANNOT BELIEVE LOYALTY MEANS SO LITTLE TO YOU
HOW CAN YOU DO THIS? HOW CAN YOU TURN AWAY FROM--
ENOUGH
TAKE THEM AWAY, EXETER
THEM AND THE RAVENS, AND PUT THEM ON THE BOATS
AT ONCE ETHAN
FRATOR

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
WHY WOULDN'T I BE? I WAS NEVER EVEN *TOUCHED* IN THE BATTLE
AND EVEN IF I *WAS*, THIS THING ON MY ARM WOULD *HEAL* ME, RIGHT?
YOU *KNOW* THAT'S NOT WHAT I MEAN
IT'S WHAT HAD TO BE DONE. I DIDN'T *LIKE* IT
BUT LATELY I FIND MYSELF DOING A LOT OF THINGS I DON'T LIKE
YOU DID THE *RIGHT* THING
YES
I DOUBT ANYONE'S GOING TO GIVE EXETER TROUBLE, BUT I'LL CATCH UP WITH THEM JUST THE SAME
MAKE SURE THERE ARE NO UNFORTUNATE *INCIDENTS*
BE CAREFUL, ASHLEIGH
ETHAN

YOU SHOULD BE PLEASED YOU WERE ABLE TO TAKE THE ISLAND WITHOUT THE LOSS OF A SINGLE LIFE
WE ACCOMPLISHED *THAT MUCH*, AT LEAST
THOUGH FRANKLY WE'LL NEED TO ACCOMPLISH *MORE* THAN RUNNING OFF A HANDFUL OF GUARDS FROM A DESOLATE ISLAND
ANY VICTORY IS WORTH ENJOYING, ETHAN
I WANTED TO ASK YOU SOMETHING *ELSE*.

YOU AND ASHLEIGH SEEM MUCH *CLOSER* THAN YOU DID BEFORE YOUR JOURNEY TO HAVEN
DID SOMETHING *HAPPEN* BETWEEN THE TWO OF YOU?

I GUESS YOU'VE KNOWN ME TOO LONG FOR ME TO HAVE MUCH CHANCE OF HIDING SOMETHING FROM YOU, SKINK
YES, WE'RE *TOGETHER* NOW I WAS FINALLY ABLE TO ADMIT HOW MUCH I CARE ABOUT HER.
THAT'S GOOD

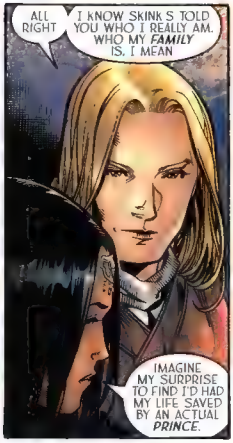
I'M GLAD *YOU* THINK SO. I DOUBT YOU'D HEAR MUCH AGREEMENT FROM MY PARENTS
OR MY BROTHER AND SISTER
THOUGH I DON'T SUPPOSE I SHOULD REALLY BE WORRYING ABOUT *THEIR* REACTION
THEY'RE ALREADY GOING TO DISOWN ME FOR BEING A *TURNCOAT*
I CAN'T MAKE IT MUCH *WORSE* BY BEING WITH THE ENEMY'S SISTER
I THINK THERE ARE MORE *IMMEDIATE* THINGS YOU SHOULD BE CONCERNED ABOUT

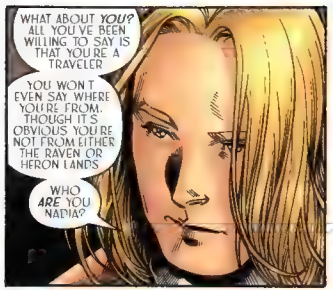
LIKE HOW WE'RE GOING TO *HOLD* THIS ISLAND WHEN THE KINGDOMS FIND OUT WHAT WE'VE DONE?

BELIEVE ME, THAT HAS CROSSED MY MIND
BEFORE, I ONLY HAD TO CONTEND WITH THE RAVENS BEING AN OBSTACLE. NOW MY OWN KINGDOM COULD BECOME ONE.
WE'VE PUT OURSELVES SQUARELY BETWEEN THEM, SKINK
LITERALLY
BUT I DO BELIEVE THIS PLAN HAS A CHANCE OF SUCCEEDING
IF EVERYTHING HAPPENS THE WAY IT'S SUPPOSED TO AND IF I CAN RELY ON THIS POWER I HAVE
I REALIZE WE'VE DONE THE EASY PART BY TAKING THE ISLAND
KEEPING IT IS GOING TO BE THE REAL TEST
HAVE FAITH, ETHAN GOOD DOES TRIUMPH
I'LL GO SEE WHAT KIND OF FOOD STORES ARE LEFT AND PREPARE SOMETHING
REST.

BOLD COURSE OF ACTION, TAKING A WHOLE *ISLAND* FOR YOURSELF
NOT FOR MYSELF
FOR THE LESSER RACES FOR A SANCTUARY
THERE'S NO NEED TO SOUND APOLOGETIC I'VE ALREADY SAID THE CAUSE YOU'RE PURSUING IS A NOBLE ONE
SLAVERY OF *ANY* KIND IS DEPLORABLE
NADIA, YOU'VE STAYED WITH US SINCE WE MET

EVEN THROUGH SOMETHING *DANGEROUS* LIKE THIS
YOU'VE STAYED WITH US, AS FAR AS I CAN TELL, WITHOUT MUCH *REASON*.
WE HAVEN'T EVEN HAD A CHANCE TO *TALK*
SO
TALK


ALL RIGHT
I KNOW SKINK S TOLD YOU WHO I REALLY AM. WHO MY *FAMILY* IS, I MEAN
IMAGINE MY SURPRISE TO FIND I'D HAD MY LIFE SAVED BY AN ACTUAL *PRINCE*.


WHAT ABOUT *YOU*? ALL YOU'VE BEEN WILLING TO SAY IS THAT YOU'RE A TRAVELER
YOU WON'T EVEN SAY WHERE YOU'RE FROM. THOUGH IT'S OBVIOUS YOU'RE NOT FROM EITHER THE RAVEN OR HERON LANDS
WHO *ARE* YOU NADIA?

WELL, I HOPE YOU WON'T BE DISAPPOINTED TO LEARN I'M *NOT* A PRINCESS
I'VE BEEN CIRCUMSPECT BECAUSE I *AM* VERY MUCH A STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND
BUT I OWE YOU *HONESTY* AT THE VERY LEAST

I SAID I WAS FROM FAR AWAY. I MEANT IT
I'M FROM *TIGRIS*. TRULY THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WORLD FROM HERE
WE'VE ISOLATED OURSELVES FOR SO LONG, I CAN UNDERSTAND WHY MOST PEOPLE DON'T EVEN BELIEVE MY KINGDOM IS *REAL*.
OUR ANCESTORS WERE *AGAINST* THE FORCED LABOR OF THE LESSER RACES, SO THEY ABANDONED BOTH THE RAVEN AND HERON KINGDOMS
THEY SET OUT ACROSS THE OCEANS AND FOUNDED THEIR OWN KINGDOM. THEY LABORED FOR THEMSELVES.
AND EVENTUALLY BUILT *MACHINES* THAT LABORED FOR THEM
AT LEAST NOW I UNDERSTAND WHY YOU WERE SYMPATHETIC TO THE UNDERGROUND'S CAUSE.
WHY DID YOU *LEAVE* TIGRIS?
RIGHT NOW, I'M HELPING *YOU*.
GOOD
I HAVE A FEELING WE'RE GOING TO NEED IT

THE WATERFRONT SHOULD BE JUST AHEAD.
HOPEFULLY THERE'LL BE A CRAFT DOCKED THERE THAT CAN GET US ACROSS THE GREAT SEA
NOT A VERY GLORIOUS END TO OUR INVASION FORCE, IS IT KAI?
REDUCED TO THE HANDFUL OF US SKULKING THROUGH ALLEYS IN THE SMALL HOURS OF THE NIGHT
ENGAGING IN *THIEVERY* IN AN EFFORT TO MERELY GET BACK HOME
WE DO WHAT WE MUST NOW, YLENA
OUR SITUATION MIGHT BE VASTLY DIFFERENT HAD I BEEN *WISE ENOUGH* TO IGNORE THE COUNSEL OF BERND RECHTS.

HE LED US STRAIGHT INTO THE TEETH OF THAT AMBUSH, THEN *LEFT US* TO OUR FATE
RECRIMINATIONS ARE USELESS NOW, BROTHER
WE NEED TO CONCENTRATE ON GETTING HOME
I HEARD MAYBE A FEW DOZEN ESCAPED
HOLD
AND *THEM* SCATTERED ALL OVER THE COUNTRYSIDE. RIGHT RETRIBUTION FOR THE ROUT AT POINT KORDAY
KING BRON S PROVEN HIMSELF, AS FAR AS *I'M* CONCERNED HE S NOT SQUEAMISH ABOUT *WIPING OUT* THE HERONS
UNLIKE HIS *FATHER*
MAYBE A LITTLE *TOO* ANXIOUS TO WIPE THEM OUT. I M ALL FOR TAKING THE FIGHT TO *THEM*
BUT PUTTING THE WARSHIPS TO SEA AND
YOU HEARD?
I DID
LET S GET DOWN TO THE WATERFRONT AND SEE IF WE CAN FIND OUT WHEN –
ANCESTORS

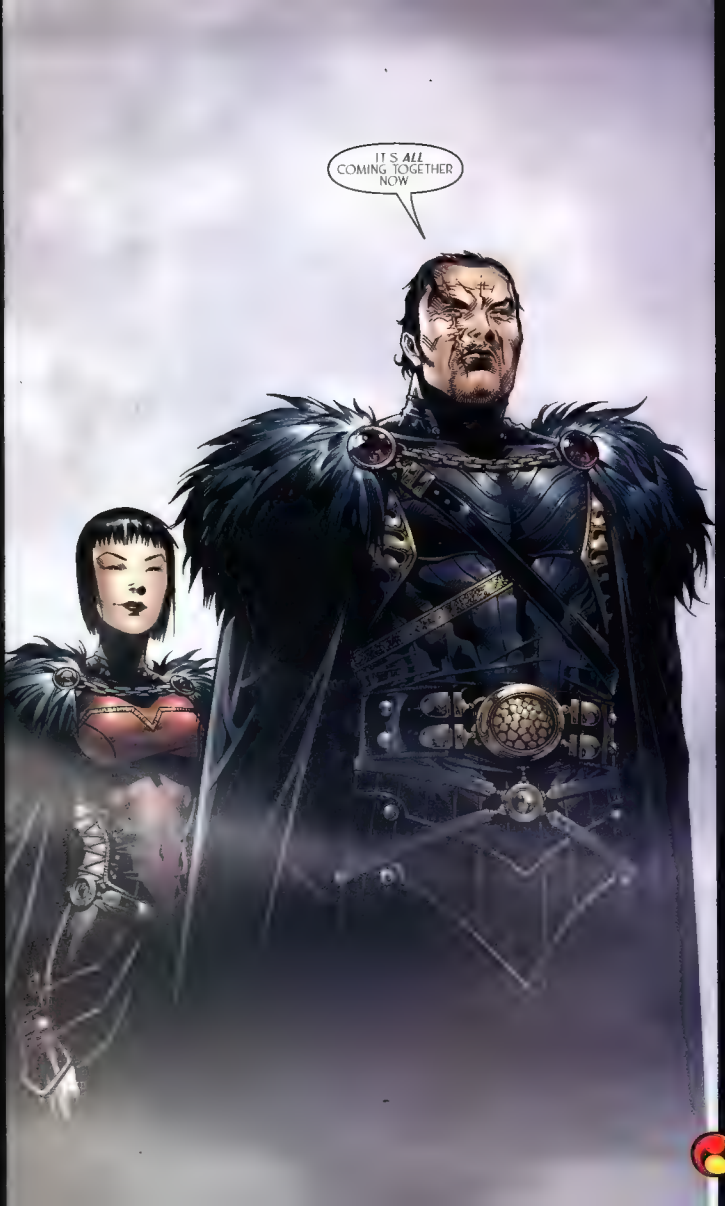
THE FLEET

THE *ENTIRE* RAVEN FLEET

THE HERONS WILL NEVER EXPECT THIS

WE'LL BE SACKING THEIR CAPITAL BEFORE THEY EVEN REALIZE WE'RE THERE

OH YES


IT'S ALL COMING TOGETHER NOW

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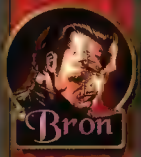

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When the battle was met, first victory belonged to the Herons, but Ethan's oldest brother and heir to the throne, Artor, was brutally slain by Bron. Ethan swore vengeance.

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Ethan and his companions successfully took the Tournament Isle, located in the Great Sea between Raven and Heron lands, as a sanctuary for the Lesser Races. They are unaware, however, that the fleets of both kingdoms have put to sea for a decisive battle.

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COMING HERE?

ETHAN!
THEY'RE COMING!
WHAT?
WHO'S COMING NADIA?
THE RAVEN FLEET
I WENT FOR A WALK THIS MORNING, DOWN TO THE DOCKS, AND I SAW THE SHIPS
STILL FIVE OR SIX LEAGUES OUT TO SEA, BUT DEFINITELY HEADING FOR THE HARBOR
YOU CAN SEE THAT FAR?
I CAN
THEY MUST BE COMING TO THE ISLAND TO LAY ON SUPPLIES
THEY CAN'T POSSIBLY KNOW WE'RE HERE
THEY WON'T FIND THEIR GARRISON WHEN THEY COME ASHORE
WE'LL HAVE TO BE WELL CONCEALED IF WE'RE TO HAVE ANY HOPE OF THEM MOVING ON

AND YOU'RE SURE IT'S JUST *HIM* AND A FEW OTHERS
NO LARGE FORCE?
NO, KING BRON, JUST HIM, THE PRINCESS ASHLEIGH AND THREE MORE THAT WE SAW
TWO OF *THEM* WERE LESSER RACES
THEN HE'S MORE THE FOOL FOR *SPARING* YOU AND SENDING YOU AWAY FROM THE TOURNAMENT ISLE
WE'LL CATCH ETHAN *AND* MY SISTER IN THE SAME PLACE
COMPLETELY UNAWARE OF WHAT'S COMING
SIRE, I MUST *AGAIN* VOICE MY CONCERNS
WE ARE AN INVASION FLEET BOUND FOR WESTERN SHORES
YOU RISK OUR SUCCESS WITH THIS DIVERSION, ALL FOR *PERSONAL* REASONS
THEY *WILL* BE HERE LATER
YOU CAN TAKE THEM ANOTHER TIME
WHAT IS YOUR *TITLE*, HORAN?
I AM *ADMIRAL* OF YOUR FLEETS, SIRE
Ah
YES, AN *ADMIRAL* WELL, ADMIRAL, WHEN *YOU* ARE KING, YOU CAN MAKE THE DECISIONS
UNTIL THEN, *SHUT UP*

IT'S HIM
AND AT LEAST ONE OF THE RAVEN SOLDIERS WE SENT OFF THE ISLAND
THE FLEET MUST HAVE PICKED THEM UP
WHICH MEANS THEY DO KNOW WE'RE HERE
IT WOULD HAVE BEEN BETTER IF THOSE SOLDIERS HAD NEVER LEFT THE ISLAND...IF YOU TAKE MY MEANING, ETHAN.
THAT WASN'T A NECESSARY OPTION AT THE TIME, EXETER
LET'S WORRY ABOUT WHAT WE'RE GOING TO DO, INSTEAD OF WHAT WE COULD'VE DONE
IT LOOKS TO BE NEARLY THE ENTIRE FLEET.
BRON MUST BE READYING A WESTERN INVASION. THAT'S THE ONLY EXPLANATION THAT MAKES SENSE
IF HE HAS ENOUGH MIGHT TO INVADE YOUR HOMELAND, WE STAND NO CHANCE OF HOLDING THIS ISLAND
I DOUBT IT'S THE ISLAND HE'S INTERESTED IN
AS MUCH AS IT IS ME AND ASHLEIGH

SHE'S DUE BACK *SOON*, ETHAN
NOT SOON ENOUGH, SKINK
AND EVEN WHEN SHE DOES RETURN, DO YOU REALLY THINK IT WILL BE ENOUGH TO HOLD THE ISLAND?
NOT *NEARLY*
WE'RE LEFT WITH ONE CHOICE IF IT'S *ME* BRON WANTS, THAT'S WHAT WE'LL GIVE HIM
THE REST OF YOU CAN CONCEAL YOURSELVES. MAYBE ONCE IT'S SETTLED BETWEEN ME AND BRON.
ONE WAY OR THE OTHER
THE FLEET WILL LEAVE
NO
THAT'S NOT A NECESSARY OPTION EITHER.
WE'RE CLOSE TO ACCOMPLISHING THE IMPOSSIBLE. TO MAKING A DREAM *REALITY*
AND SOME DREAMS ARE WORTH *FIGHTING* FOR.
YOU TAUGHT ME THAT, ETHAN
THE THREE OF YOU GO PREPARE A SECOND LINE OF DEFENSE. HIGHER UP, NEAR THE ARENA
WE'LL MAKE THEM *EARN* EVERY BIT OF THIS ISLAND
EXETER, YOU CAN'T DO THIS *ALONE*. YOU'LL BE
THIS IS WHAT I AM *BEST* AT, ETHAN.
WHEN THE RAVENS LAND
THEY'LL FIND *ME*

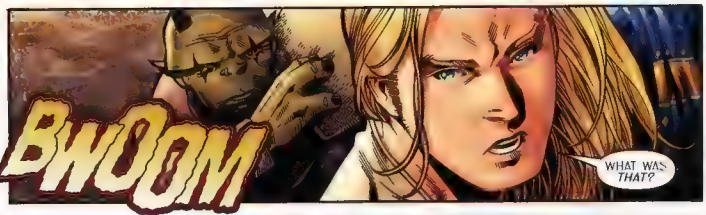
KING DANE
THE LONG-RANGE SCOUTS HAVE RETURNED. THEY'RE REPORTING A SIGHTING OF THE RAVEN FLEET
...AND IT APPEARS TO BE THE ENTIRETY OF IT...
MAKING FOR THE BAY AT THE TOURNAMENT ISLE
THE ENTIRE RAVEN FLEET HAS PUT TO SEA, ADMIRAL?
WITH THAT SORT OF MIGHT BRON OBVIOUSLY PLANS AN INVASION.
AYE, SIR. BUT THEY'LL HAVE NO WAY OF KNOWING WE'VE PUT TO SEA AS WELL
THEY'RE LIKELY LOOKING TO TAKE ON SUPPLIES AT THE ISLE
WE'LL BLOCKADE THE HARBOR MOUTH AND CRUSH THEM WHILE THEY LIE AT ANCHOR
THEY ARE OURS, SIRE
THEN GIVE THE ORDER, SHAYLAH
FULL SPEED TO THE TOURNAMENT ISLE

STEP LIVELY, YOU LOT
...FAN OUT THROUGH THE STREETS
SEARCH EVERY BUILDING, EVERY ALLEY FIND THE KING'S SISTER AND THE HERON PRINCE
KILL ANYONE ELSE YOU COME ACROSS, BUT THOSE TWO MUST BE TAKEN ALIVE, OR YOU'LL ANSWER TO KING BRON HIMSELF
HE'LL BE ASHORE PRESENTLY, AND FOR ALL OUR SAKES, WE'D BETTER HAVE WHAT HE WANTS
WHAT ARE WE DOING HERE? WE SHOULD BE SPILLING HERON BLOOD, NOT RUNNING THE KING'S ERRANDS.
THAT'S THE SORT OF TALK THAT'LL GET YOUR OWN BLOOD SPILLED, BOY
KEEP YOUR MOUTH SHUT, AND YOU'LL KEEP YOUR HEAD ON YOUR SHOULDERS
SPOOKY, THIS, SEEING THE TOURNAMENT ISLE DESERTED LIKE—
GAAGH!
THIS ISLAND HAS BEEN CLAIMED BY THE UNDERGROUND AS A SANCTUARY FOR ALL LESSER RACES

AND WE DON'T WANT YOU HERE

I SHOULD BE STANDING AND FIGHTING *WITH* EXETER

NOT LEAVING HIM ON HIS *OWN* LIKE THIS
ETHAN, YOU *KNOW* THIS IS THE ONLY HOPE WE HAVE OF HOLDING THE RAVENS
OF *HOLDING OUT* UNTIL ASHLEIGH RETURNS
BY LETTING EXETER *SACRIFICE* HIMSELF?
THAT'S A HIGH PRICE TO PAY FOR—


BWOOM
WHAT WAS *THAT*?

THUNDER?
NO, IT CAME FROM THE *HARBOR*. IT SOUNDED LIKE

CANNON FIRE.

FIRE!
HOW DID THEY FIND US?!
THERE'S NO REASON THE HERON FLEET WOULD EVEN BE AT SEA!
THIS HAD TO BE A TRAP, WITH ETHAN AS BAIT. WE'LL BE BOTTLED UP AND BLOWN TO—
CHOOM
SPOOSH

DAMN IT!
EVERYTHING'S COMING APART AND THERE'S NO WAY TO STOP IT!
ETHAN, I'VE KNOWN YOU MY ENTIRE LIFE
...BUT I'VE NEVER KNOWN YOU TO GIVE UP
THE FLEETS OF BOTH KINGDOMS ARE POUNDING EACH OTHER TO PIECES OUT THERE, AND WHOEVER'S LEFT AT THE END OF IT WILL TAKE THE ISLAND
I DON'T WANT TO GIVE UP, SKINK, BUT THERE'S NOT MUCH I CAN DO
YOU CAN AFFECT WHAT'S ABOUT TO HAPPEN, IF YOU OPEN YOURSELF TO THE POWER WITHIN YOU
TO ALL THE POWER WITHIN YOU.
YOU CAN DO THIS, ETHAN. IF YOU ALLOW YOURSELF TO
DO. YOU UNDERSTAND?
YES.

HOW MANY MORE OF YOU?
AND WHO HAS THE COURAGE TO BE NEXT?
YOU?
YOU?
YOUR BEST HOPE IS TO DROWN ME IN YOUR BLOOD!
HRG!
YI!?
HK
THUK
THUK

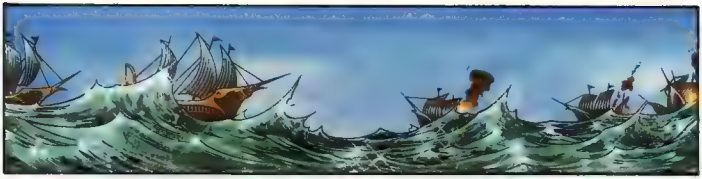
PRINCESS ASHLEIGH?
THEY ESCAPED FROM RAVEN LANDS, AND THEN THE SWIMMERS BROUGHT US HERE IN THEIR UNDERWATER CRAFT.
THERE ARE MORE ON THE WAY.
THE LESSER RACES ARE WILLING TO FIGHT FOR THEIR FREEDOM NOW THAT IT'S SO CLOSE AT HAND.
THEY'RE WILLING TO DIE FOR IT.
AND THEY'RE WILLING TO KILL FOR IT.

SORRY WE'RE LATE
WHAT'S GOING ON?
WHERE DID THEY ALL COME FROM?
EXETER, I CAN'T IMAGINE HOW YOU HELD THEM AT BAY BY YOURSELF
HOW SEVERE ARE YOUR WOUNDS?
I'LL LIVE
I ALWAYS DO
WHAT HAPPENED? WHEN DID THE FLEETS GET HERE?
SHORTLY AFTER YOU LEFT
BRON MUST HAVE PICKED UP THE RAVENS WE SENT OFF THE ISLAND
THE FLEET ARRIVED LOOKING FOR YOU AND ETHAN
THEN THE HERONS SHOWED UP
AND WHERE IS ETHAN NOW?
AT THIS POINT
I DON'T KNOW

COME ABOUT FOR ANOTHER BROADSIDE, THEN WE CLOSE!
I WANT THAT FLAGSHIP!
MORE WATER!
HURRY OR SHE'LL BURN DOWN TO THE WATERLINE!
SIRE, LOOK!
THERE, OFF THE PORT SIDE!
IS THAT ETHAN?
WHAT'S HE DOING HERE?
WHAT'S HE DOING?

I AM A PRINCE OF THE HERON DYNASTY, YET I CAME HERE TO CLAIM THE TOURNAMENT ISLE AS A *SANCTUARY* FOR THE LESSER RACES
BUT YOUR *WAR* FOLLOWED ME HERE
LEFT TO YOUR OWN DEVICES, YOU RAVENS AND HERONS WOULD DESTROY *EACH OTHER* AND *ANYONE* CAUGHT IN BETWEEN
I TRIED TO VIEW THE CONFLICT AS SOMETHING *SEPARATE*, SOMETHING I COULD TURN MY BACK UPON
I WAS *NAÏVE* TO THINK SUCH A THING BUT UNDERSTANDING THAT I CAN'T *IGNORE* THE WAR DOESN'T MEAN I HAVE TO *ACCEPT* IT.
I WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR *STARTING* THIS WAR

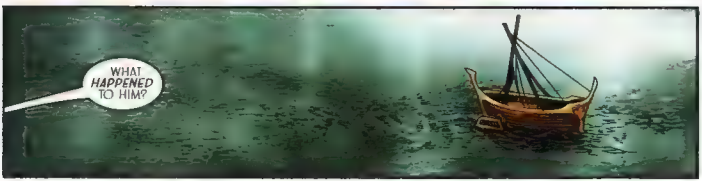
...AND I WILL BE THE ONE TO END IT!



HOW COULD HE COMMAND ENOUGH POWER FOR THAT DISPLAY?
ENOUGH POWER TO DRIVE THE FLEETS FROM ONE ANOTHER
WE MUST
-KOFF KOFF-
STOP THIS CONFLICT
OR HE'LL DESTROY US

HOW, DANE?
HOW DID ETHAN DO THAT?
I KNEW MY SON HAD BEEN TOUCHED BY GREATNESS

BUT I NEVER REALIZED HE WAS CAPABLE OF SUCH A THING
ETHAN?
WHAT


WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM?

EVERYTHING OUT THERE'S *STOPPED*, SKINK. ETHAN SEPARATED THE FLEETS, THEN...
...*NOTHING*

HOW WAS THAT EVEN *POSSIBLE*, WHAT ETHAN DID?
IF ETHAN *OPENS* HIMSELF TO THE POSSIBILITY, HE IS CAPABLE OF A GREAT DEAL
A *GREAT* DEAL
DO YOU THINK THIS WILL KEEP THE FLEETS AT BAY?

I BELIEVE SO..
AS LONG AS THEY DO NOT REALIZE SUCH A USE OF ETHAN'S POWER HAS LIKELY *EXHAUSTED* HIM.

EXHAUSTED HIM? THEN
WHERE *IS* ETHAN?

Oh, NO.
THIS ISN'T QUITE OVER YET

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When the battle was met, first victory belonged to the Herons, but Ethan's oldest brother and heir to the throne, Artor, was brutally slain by Bron. Ethan swore vengeance.

Not long after, Bron was imbued with power by Mai Shen, who revealed herself to him as a member of the godlike First. Bron then murdered his father, framed his sister Ashleigh for the crime, and took the throne for himself.

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Ethan and his companions successfully took the Tournament Isle, located in the Great Sea between Raven and Heron lands, as a sanctuary for the Lesser Races. When the fleets of both kingdoms converged on the Isle, Ethan used his power to end their conflict. Exhausted, Ethan washed ashore directly into Bron's hands.

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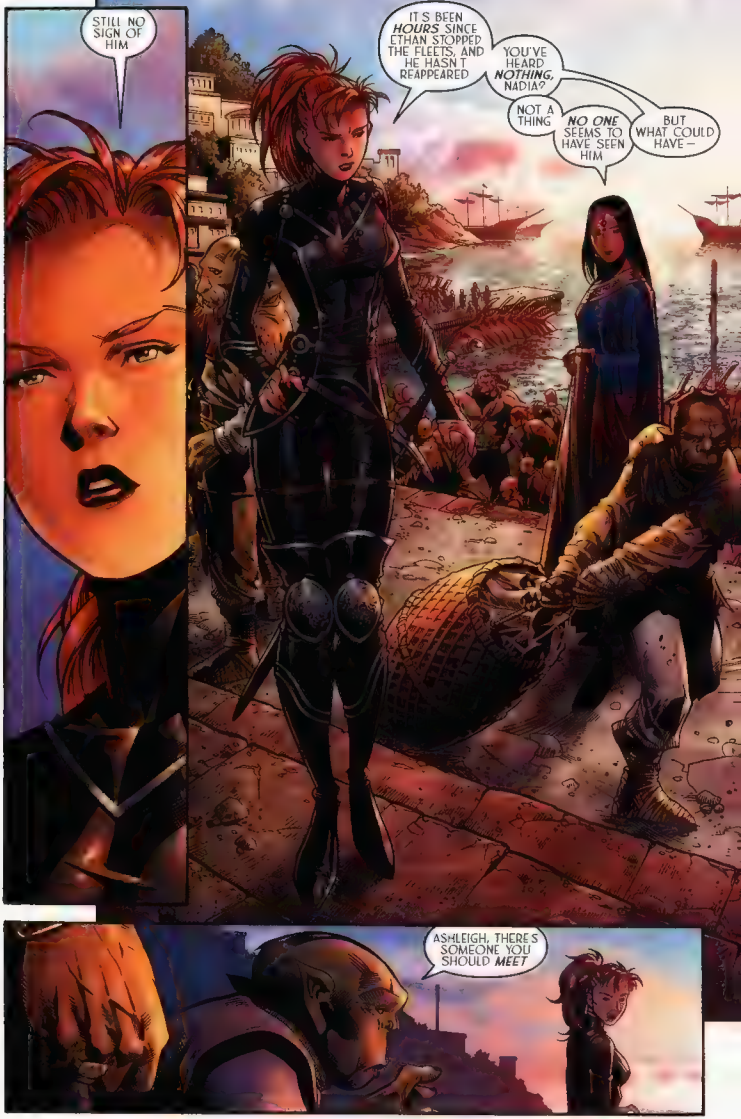
THERE'S ONE MORE THING TO BE DONE.
AND I WANT TO BE FINISHED BEFORE WE HAVE AN AUDIENCE.

I ASSUME YOU REMEMBER THIS PLACE, ETHAN?

WHAT AM I DOING IN THE ARENA? HOW DID I GET HERE, BRON?
I DRAGGED YOU HERE AFTER YOU'D WASHED ASHORE
ALMOST THE SAME PLACE I CAME ASHORE AFTER I WAS THROWN FROM MY SHIP
PREVAILING CURRENTS, I SUPPOSE
SO
A FITTING VENUE TO END THIS, DON'T YOU THINK? IT DID ALL BEGIN HERE
YOU IMPRESS ME, ETHAN, SEPARATING THE FLEETS LIKE THAT
SEEMS YOU EFFECTIVELY ENDED THE WAR
AND TRUTHFULLY, I FIND I REALLY DON'T CARE
MY ONLY CONCERN IS KILLING YOU

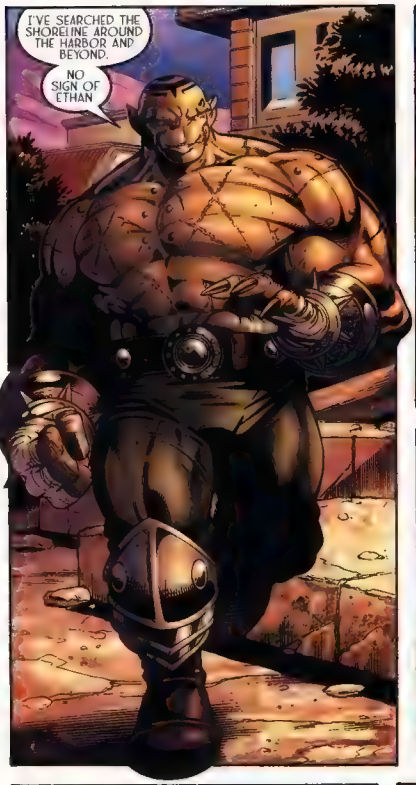
NO ONE EVER DEFEATED ME ON THESE SANDS UNTIL YOU
BUT THAT'S GOING TO BE RECTIFIED
YOUR OUTBURST IN THE HARBOR MUST HAVE TAKEN A GREAT DEAL OUT OF YOU.
PITY.
I'VE STRENGTH ENOUGH LEFT FOR YOU, BRON
STRENGTH ENOUGH TO SEE YOU DEAD FOR MY BROTHER'S MURDER!


STILL NO SIGN OF HIM
IT'S BEEN HOURS SINCE ETHAN STOPPED THE FLEETS, AND HE HASN'T REAPPEARED
YOU'VE HEARD NOTHING, NADIA?
NOT A THING
NO ONE SEEMS TO HAVE SEEN HIM
BUT WHAT COULD HAVE—
ASHLEIGH, THERE'S SOMEONE YOU SHOULD MEET

THIS IS KING DANE
ETHAN'S FATHER.
SIRE, THIS IS ASHLEIGH, PRINCESS OF THE RAVEN DYNASTY. SHE AND ETHAN ARE
FRIENDS
I'M PLEASED TO FINALLY MAKE YOUR ACQUAINTANCE
I'M HONORED
I'M TOLD YOU AND ETHAN HAVE CLAIMED THE TOURNAMENT ISLE AS A SANCTUARY FOR THE LESSER RACES.
MY SON IS HEADSTRONG, BUT HE'S NOT A FOOL. WHAT ARE YOU PLAYING AT, RAVEN-SPAWN?
NOTHING
THERE'S NO TREACHERY HERE, IF THAT'S WHAT YOU MEAN. ETHAN MADE THESE DECISIONS WITHOUT MY INFLUENCE.
I WOULD HEAR THAT FROM HIS LIPS, NOT YOURS.
WHERE IS HE NOW?
I WISH I KNEW

YOU TRULY THINK YOU CAN *BEST* ME, BOY?

YOU BEAT ME ONCE
...BUT ONLY BECAUSE YOU WERE GRANTED POWER
I'VE BEEN GIVEN THE SAME GIFT.
...AND YOU WON'T STAND AGAINST ME!


I'VE SEARCHED THE SHORELINE AROUND THE HARBOR AND BEYOND.
NO SIGN OF ETHAN

I HAVE BURIED *ONE* SON, AND LIKELY HAVE LOST TWO *OTHER* CHILDREN
I WILL NOT ACCEPT THAT ETHAN IS *GONE*...

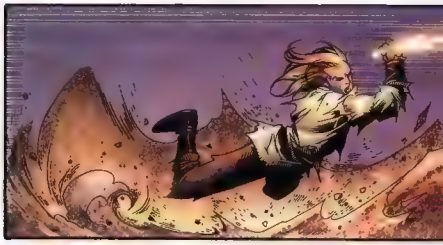
PARTICULARLY WHEN A *WITCH* OF RAVEN BLOOD IS TO BLAME

ASHLEIGH IS NOT TO BLAME. SHE HAS BEEN ETHAN'S *SAVIOR*, AS WELL AS HIS LOVER
HOW *DARE* YOU!
WHO ARE *YOU* TO SPEAK TO ME SO?!
I AM A FREE MAN IN A FREE LAND

I HATE TO *DISAGREE* WITH YOU IN PUBLIC, FATHER

BUT YOU HAVEN'T LOST US
KAI?
YLENA?
YOU'RE ALIVE!
Oh, MY CHILDREN, HOW IS THIS POSSIBLE?
THE DETAILS CAN WAIT, FATHER
BUT AFTER THE INVASION FORCE WAS ROUTED WE STOLE A BOAT AND FOLLOWED THE RAVEN FLEET.
ONE OF OUR OWN SHIPS PICKED US UP JUST AFTER ETHAN DID WHAT HE DID
NOW HE'S NOWHERE TO BE FOUND?
YOUR BROTHER HASN'T BEEN SEEN SINCE HE SEPARATED THE FLEETS
UNLESS THERE'S ANOTHER EXPLANATION FOR THAT DISPLAY
I THINK WE'VE FOUND HIM

WHAT'S THE MATTER, WHELP?



WHAT IS IT YOU *EXPECT*, BRON?

YOU WANT *ME* DEAD

NOTHING MORE TO SAY?
NO MORE VOWS OF VENGEANCE?
I WANT YOU DEAD
HMF!
WHAT'S LEFT TO SAY?
AAAGH!

WHNF
I WILL SAY *THIS* — YOU'RE FINALLY GOING TO PAY THE *PRICE* FOR WHAT YOU DID TO MY BROTHER
FOR WHAT YOU DID TO YOUR OWN *FATHER*
THEN COME *COLLECT* IT
NNG!

COME
COLLECT
IT
ME

ETHAN *IS* HERE
AND SO IS *BRON!*
BUT HOW CAN BRON EVEN BE ALIVE?
WE HAVE TO GET *DOWN THERE!* WE HAVE TO *HELP* ETHAN!
NO
NO? SKINK, WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? ETHAN *NEEDS* US!
THIS TEST HAS BEEN A LONG TIME IN COMING FOR ETHAN
HE MUST FIGHT THIS BATTLE ALONE

THIS HAS GONE ON LONGER THAN I'D EXPECTED, BOY
LONG ENOUGH
GAAH!

GH

NNGF!
UFF!
WELL, THIS
+HOFF KOFF+
THIS ISN'T QUITE WHAT I'D PLANNED
YOU AND ASHLEIGH DESERVE EACH OTHER YOU KNOW
I CAN'T DECIDE WHICH OF YOU I HATE MORE.
I KNEW ASHLEIGH WOULD KILL ME GIVEN THE CHANCE YOU
I DIDN'T THINK YOU HAD THE COURAGE
YOU WERE WRONG

WHAT
MAI SHEN
I DO SO *HATE* BEING WRONG, HERON PRINCE
I NEVER EXPECTED YOU TO BE SO *RESILIENT*
LOOK WHAT YOU'VE DONE TO MY POOR LITTLE KING
I'M NOT SURE I'LL BE ABLE TO PUT HIM BACK TOGETHER AGAIN.
YOU'LL NEVER HAVE THE *CHANCE!*
NO, I'M *WELL AWARE* OF WHAT YOU CAN DO TO MY KIND..
hhhh
AND *THAT'S* A BATTLE I'M NOT PREPARED TO FIGHT

GONE
ETHAN!
ETHAN! WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM?
YLENA?
HOW DID YOU GET HERE? THE LAST I KNEW YOU WERE—
LATER
FATHER, I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU MUST THINK AT THIS POINT. THE THINGS I'VE DONE, THE DECISIONS I'VE MADE..
I CAN'T EVEN BE SURE I AVENGED ARTOR
ALL IN DUE TIME, MY SON. RIGHT NOW...
I CARE ONLY THAT YOU'RE ALIVE

I COULDN'T HAVE DONE THIS *WITHOUT* YOU, SKINK
THIS HAS ALWAYS BEEN ABOUT *YOU*, ETHAN. I HAVE MERELY ACTED AS A *GUIDE* ON OCCASION
THERE'S VERY LITTLE YOU CAN'T ACCOMPLISH, *WHATEVER* THE FUTURE MIGHT DEMAND OF YOU
I'D RATHER NOT *THINK* ABOUT THE FUTURE RIGHT NOW
I'M JUST GLAD *THIS PART* IS OVER.
NO, ETHAN, IT'S NOT *OVER*
WE'RE ONLY JUST STARTING

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Thanks to:
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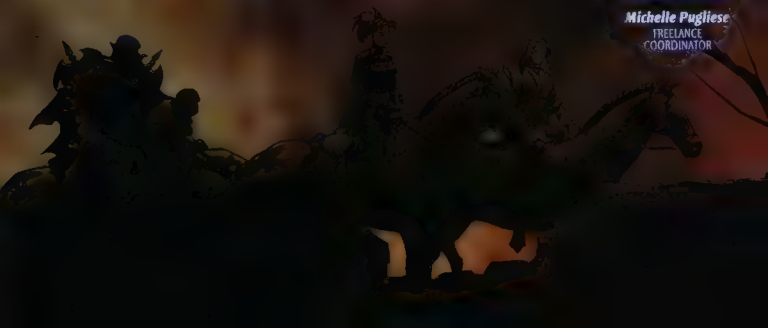

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Thus Far in Scion

Bron

Mai Shen

Exeter

Nadia

Dane

What started with a mysterious sigil led to war. Prince Ethan of the West-ruling Heron Dynasty was graced with a mark granting him power, leading to the accidental scarring of Prince Bron of the East-ruling Raven Dynasty during ritual combat.

War between the kingdoms followed, but as the conflict raged, Ethan pledged his loyalty to the Underground movement dedicated to freeing the genetically engineered Lesser Races. His companion in this was Ashleigh, Raven princess and sister to Bron. Eventually the two gave in to their mutual attraction and became lovers.

Ethan gathered a small band of followers including his sidekick Skink, the bounty hunter Exeter, and Nadia, a traveler from the far kingdom of Tigris. They took control of the Tournament Isle, located in the Great Sea between Raven and Heron lands, claiming it as a sanctuary for the Lesser Races. When the fleets of both kingdoms converged on the Isle, Ethan used his power to end the conflict.

Afterward, Ethan and Bron battled once again with Ethan emerging victorious. A dying Bron was spirited away by Mai Shen, a member of the godlike First, leaving Ethan to face an uncertain future.

Ethan

Ashleigh

Skink

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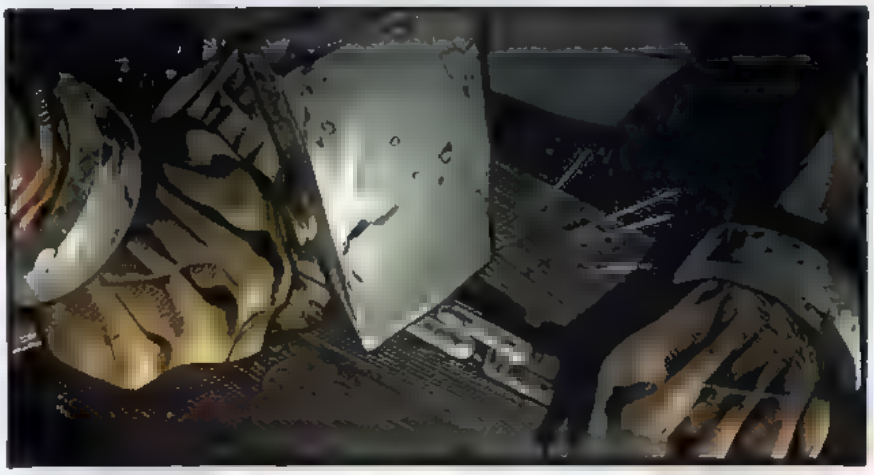
All you have in this world, all you can truly depend upon, is your own two hands. My entire life has taught me that.

My name is Elijah. I am a slave. Or at least I was born one, and have known nothing else in my life. I am of the Lesser Races, and in Raven lands, slavery is the only lot the Lesser Races have ever been permitted.



But now another possibility exists. It is a dream we dared not ponder, a word we dared not whisper.

Freedom.

I grabbed my chance at it with both hands. I had toiled in the master's fields since I was old enough to walk, as did my mother and father before me. They're gone now, my father to his reward in the next life, my mother sold to another master when she became too aged to work in the fields.

There on the borderlands we were untouched by much of what transpired in the capital to the west. Bron's ascension to the throne did not change our lives in any way. The war itself between the Ravens and the Herons meant little to us.

But what was born of that war meant everything — an island of Sanctuary, a place of true freedom that would welcome my kind as free men. Or so said the rumors that spread even to my remote region.

So there were those who decided the lure of freedom was worth risking the punishments reserved for escaped slaves. Chyrizah and Kavanan, myself and Borzhoy the Elder, four of us...

...and only four. The rest of the estate slaves chose to remain shackled to the lives they knew, no matter how abhorrent, rather than have the courage to seek a new life. Who am I to judge their choices?

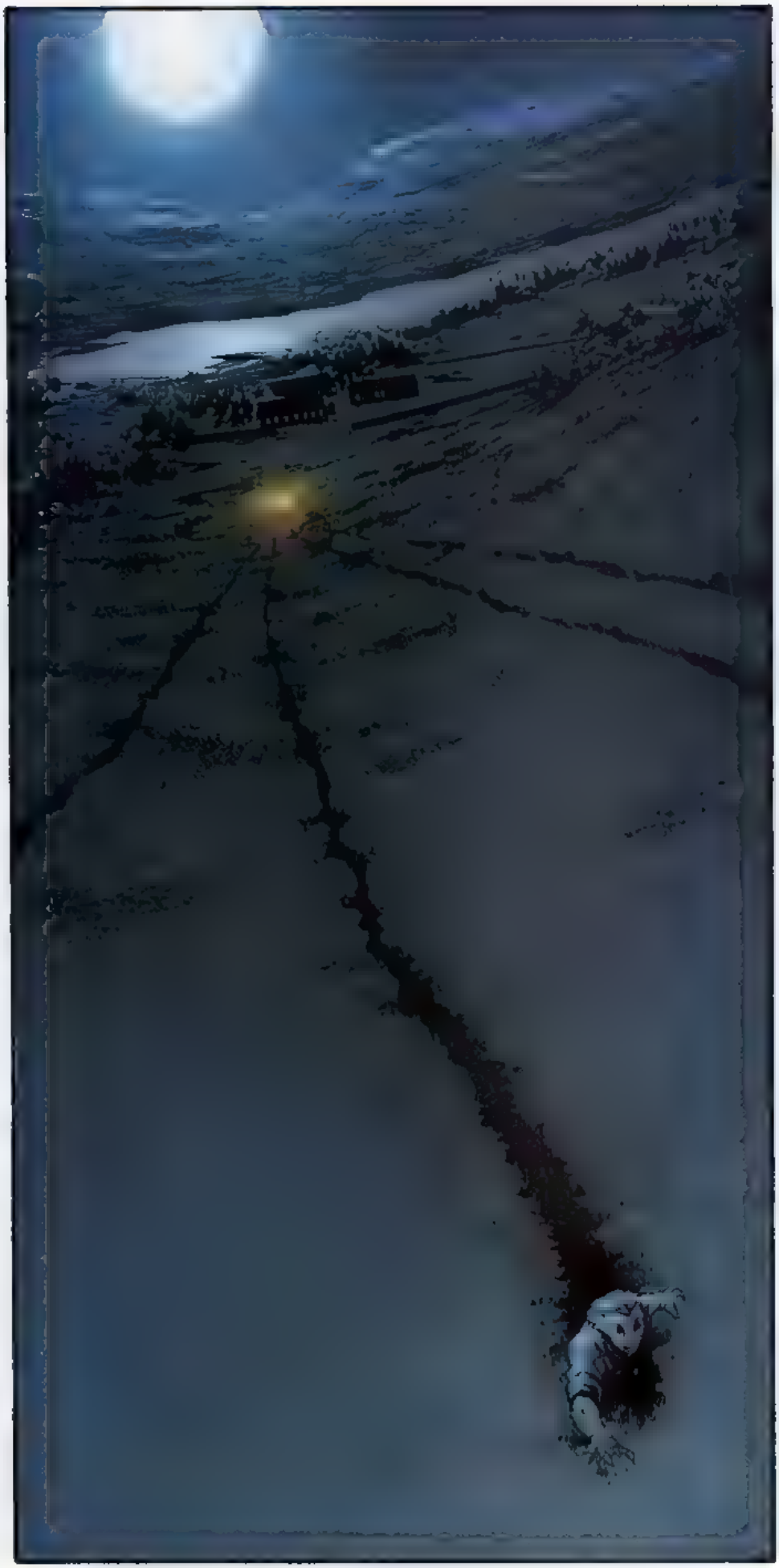
Our absence was discovered quickly, more quickly than even we had expected. Perhaps we had been revealed by one of our fellows seeking to curry favor with the master. It would not have been the first time such a thing had occurred.

We fled through the fields separately, believing our chances would be better if we could split the attention of our pursuers.

We shared a common goal, a malfunctioning section of the far fence that let out onto the deeper forest. Stalks of wheat, a crop that had been my duty to tend and harvest, whipped at my arms and face, stinging reminders of the servitude I was so desperate to leave behind.

I fled with the master's shouts and the baying of his hounds in my ears, feeling as though my feet scarcely touched the ground beneath them.

I have never run so fast.



Borzhoy the Elder was not fast enough.

He was an old man, and well past his prime. In thinking on it now, with the clear perspective of hindsight, I wonder whether escape truly had ever been his intention. I think, perhaps, he'd always meant to give the master and his overseers an easy target to pursue, allowing the rest of us to slip away into the night. He bought us our chance at freedom with his life.

I can never repay the debt. I will never forget it.

We had arranged to meet under a great tree on the shores of the swamp to the north. Again, it was Borzhoy who had suggested the swamp, once having been there himself as part of a work party. He believed the treacherous terrain would discourage any pursuers who still might have dogged our trail, and so it was.

Chyrizah and I had grown up together, while Kayanan had been bought and brought to the estate. To be thrust into such a wild place was far beyond any of our experiences.

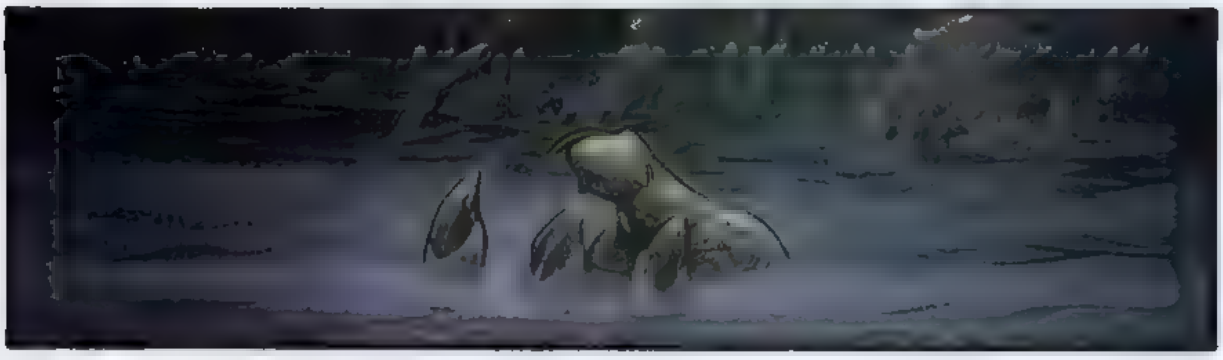
I had never in my life ventured beyond the estate's perimeter. Until I stepped through that fence and into the night beyond, the entirety of my world had consisted of the fields and the slave quarters, and upon occasion as a child, a venture inside the main house.

The unfamiliarity of our surroundings bred unease in us, the muffled and somehow secret sounds of the swamp only adding to it. Even the ground beneath our feet seemed insubstantial, as if threatening to draw us in and swallow us. But our fear was outweighed by the intoxication of being free, truly free, for the very first time.

A meager fire had never shed so much warmth, food scavenged from such a rotted place had never tasted so sweet, and the fellowship of others had never been so rich.

You live in a narrow world as a slave. You understand all the harms that could befall you, and you make your peace with them. You accept that state of fear because there is no other choice, and because there is a certain security to so intimately knowing the threats facing you.

We had traded the dangers we knew for a host we did not. We began to believe we could survive in this new world.



A single night had not even passed, and we'd lost two of our number. I felt despair's cold hand around my heart and heard its voice in my head. It told me those who had stayed behind, those whose fear outweighed their courage, had been the wiser, that we were fools soon to die for daring to hope.

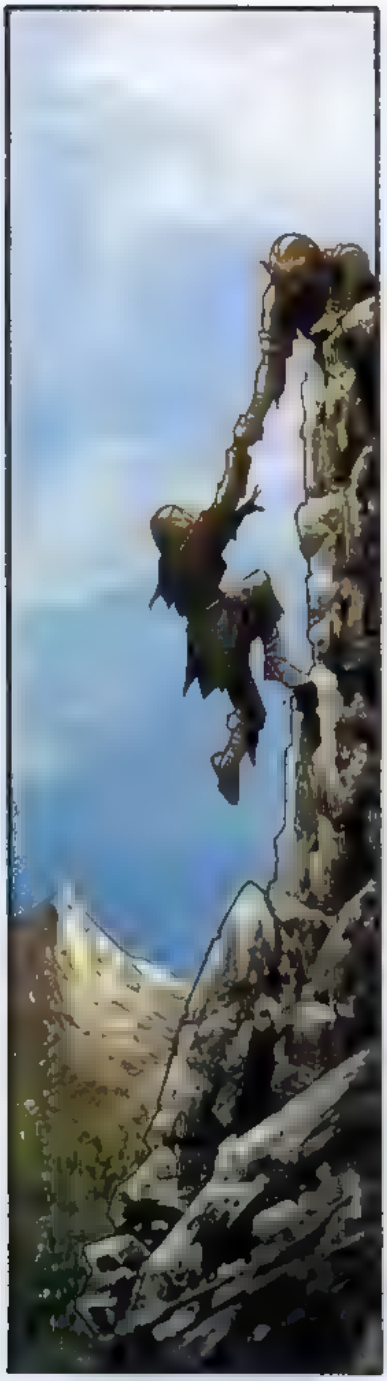
I comforted Chyrizah as best I could through that long night, realizing that in all the world, we had only each other.

We pressed on. If Chyrizah harbored doubts she did not express them and I kept my fears to myself.

We pushed north, intending to be gone from Raven lands as quickly as possible before turning west toward the sea. The land began to open to us.

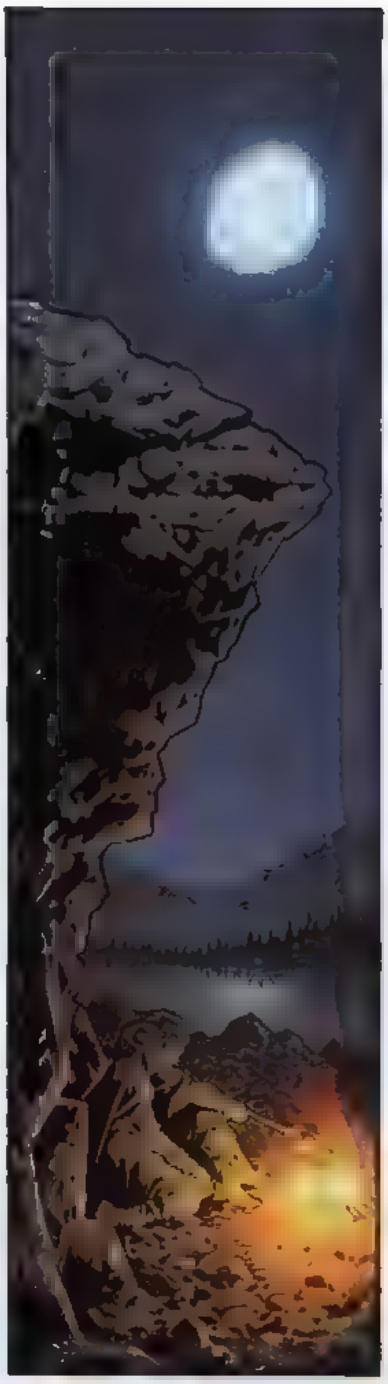
I scarcely could have believed the whole of the world was so vast. The vistas before us, bathed in sunlight, showed me the world's true face was one of magnificence, not the drab countenance I had known since birth.

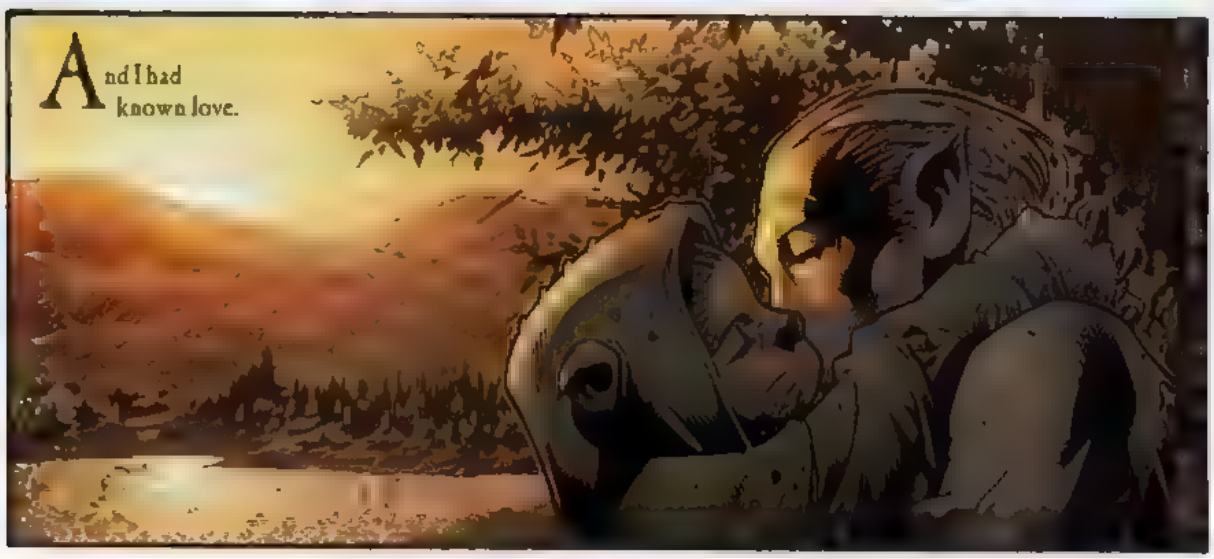
I never could have imagined sights so beautiful, and yet I beheld them each day. Every dawn brought a new and more spectacular panorama, and with it a bit more of despair's weight fell from my shoulders.

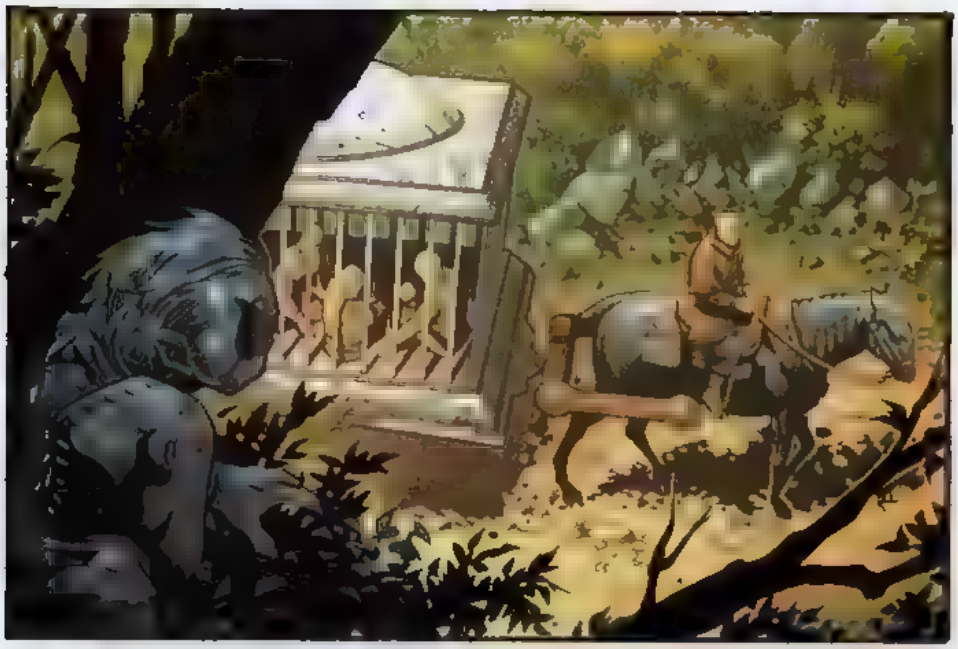


We stayed far from the places of men, voyaging into rugged territories with only one another for companionship. Chyrizah and I came to depend upon one another, and in turn support one another.

As our journey progressed, I came to realize that even if our venture ended in failure, if we perished before ever reaching the Sanctuary Isle, I would not have traded the experience. I had been witness to unforgettable beauty. I had known the sweet taste of freedom.







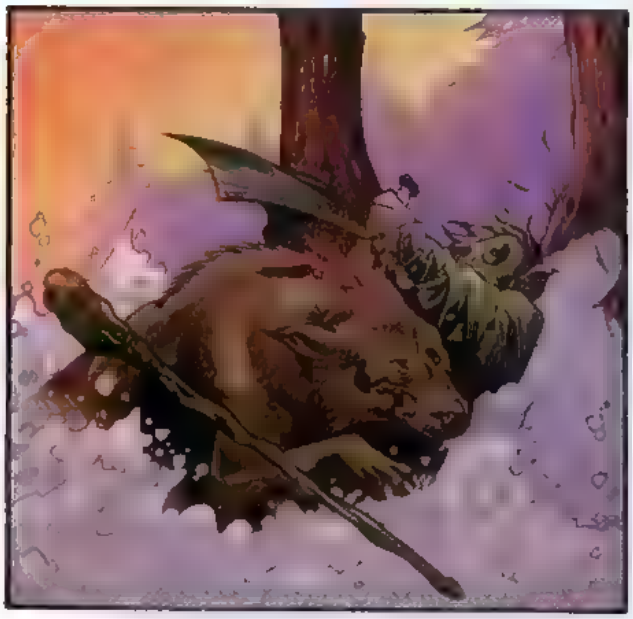
More than once we were reminded of the fate from which we had escaped, a fate that so many others still shared. Worse, it was not within our power to help those who were still shackled by the chains of slavery. We could only cling to the shadows and watch the misery of others.

The capture, either dead or alive, of escaped slaves is a lucrative business. More than once we managed to avoid being taken by one hunter or another, though we owed our escapes – some far more narrow than I care to remember – as much to luck as to our own ingenuity.

I had heard tales of a Lesser Races bounty hunter who preyed upon his own kind, but I dismissed the notion. I could not bring myself to believe such a thing was possible.

The instances of danger we endured were outnumbered by those of utter peace. Avalon's panorama spread itself before us, a splendor I came to think of as an expansive reflection of the freedom we had claimed for ourselves.
We traversed the spine of the world, moving ever westward toward the coast and the Great Sea beyond.
At times I would think of those who had wrested the Tournament Isle from the kingdoms of the East and West. Two humans of royal blood, a Heron prince and a Raven princess, had turned their backs upon their lineage in order give the Lesser Races a place of freedom. True freedom, not the servitude and repression – if not actual slavery – to which our brethren in Heron lands are subjected.
Though I could not fathom why humans would choose to aid our people, I could understand the courage demanded by such an act of defiance. It is the same courage of a slave defying a master.

Many of the threats that had dogged our trail fell away as we climbed higher into the mountains. The snow choked passes, however, held dangers all their own.

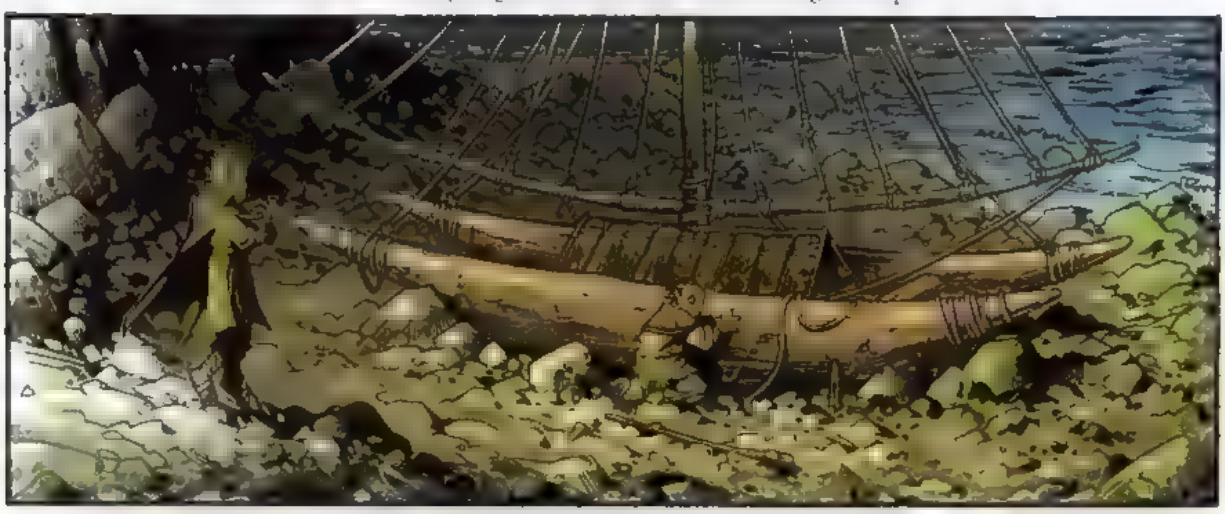


But we were not those same fearful slaves who had slunk through a broken fence and into the covering darkness. We had learned to overcome the hardships in our path, and grasped life with the tenacity of those who understand how fleeting it can be. We fought for our survival.

We killed for it.

I've no idea how many days had passed before we smelled the tang of salt in the air. Though I know it could have been no more than a few hours, it seemed an eternity before we crested a bluff and finally beheld the Great Sea. So much water, more than could ever possibly exist to the eyes of one who had never seen so much as a tarn. Its sheer, unbroken immensity, reaching as far as the eye could see and beyond, generated equal parts exhilaration and foreboding within me.

We built a boat from what could be scavenged, sometimes taking from the beach, other times traveling leagues for some necessary binding or scrap



My hands knew the tilling of soil, not the raising of sails or tacking against the wind. How could I, whose earliest memories are of working the earth, ever hope to be a sailor? And yet, I had been born a slave, and found the strength to be something else.

Even before we escaped the estate we had taught ourselves to locate a direction by reading the stars in the night sky. It's what allowed us to stay our course west across the land. Continuing across the sea would be no different.

I was enough of a realist to know we stood a far better chance of drowning, or perishing from exposure, than we did of ever reaching our goal. But we had not come so far and sacrificed so much to stop short. We set sail and placed ourselves in the hands of providence as fair winds pushed us into the unknown. The entirety of our journey, of our attempt at grasping freedom, had been a voyage into the unknown.

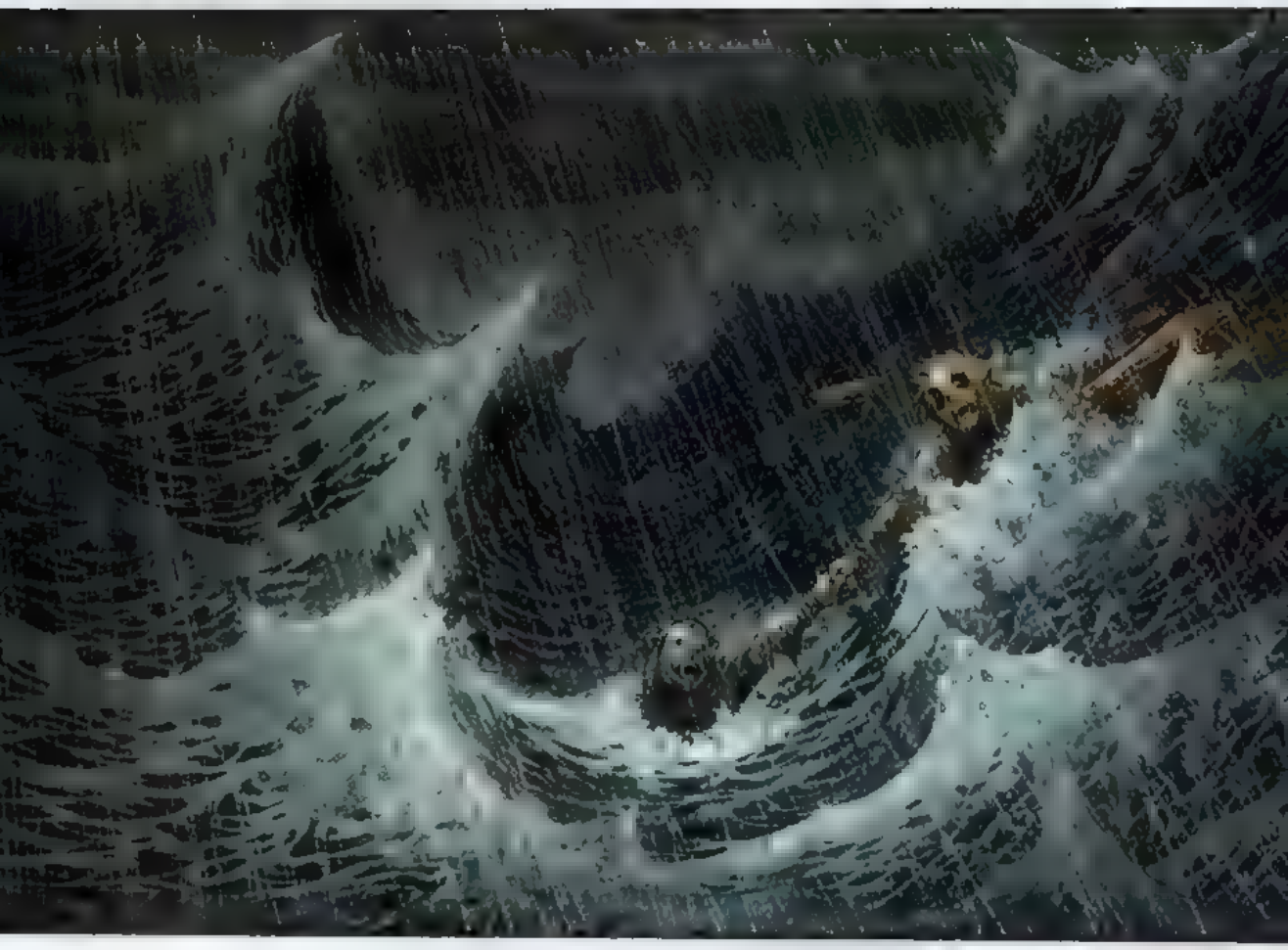
Each day we searched the horizon for a telltale break in the vastness of the sea. I'd heard stories of sea creatures, once slaves themselves, who would come to the aid of mariners. If indeed they do exist, they did not present themselves to us.

We sailed on, blessed with clear skies and calm seas. At times we sailed across a surface of glass. At others we rolled with gentle swells. We rationed our fresh water stores and subsisted on what of the ocean's bounty we could catch. Neither of us had ever eaten fish, and we savored each new taste.

It was nearly idyllic.

But it didn't last.

The sea had provided for us. Now it exacted its price. The storm was not a sudden gale, blowing up without warning. That would have been far better, far kinder, than being forced to watch our doom gathering strength and knowing we could not outrun it. Instead it bruised the northern sky, white clouds darkening to gray, and gray to black.

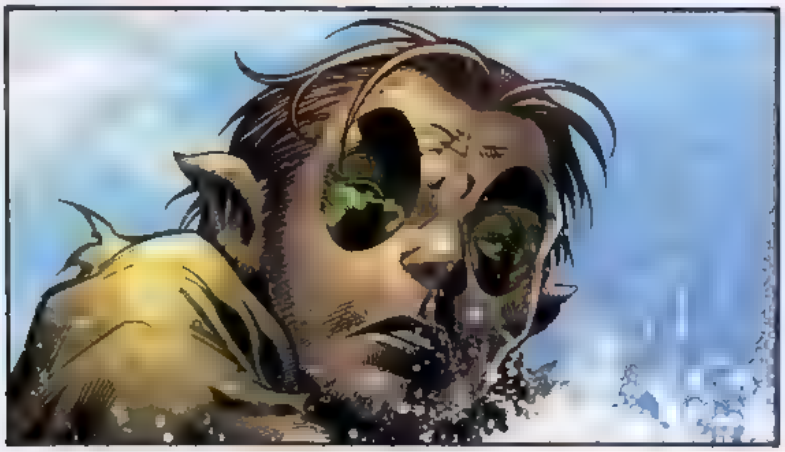


The storm unleashed its fury upon us as if reminding us of our insignificance, smashing to tinder the boat we had so proudly crafted. The wind howled and the sea heaved and bucked like a great beast, threatening to swallow us for having the temerity to believe we could escape the lives that had been ordained for us. Chyrizah and I clung to one another, as we had since that first night.

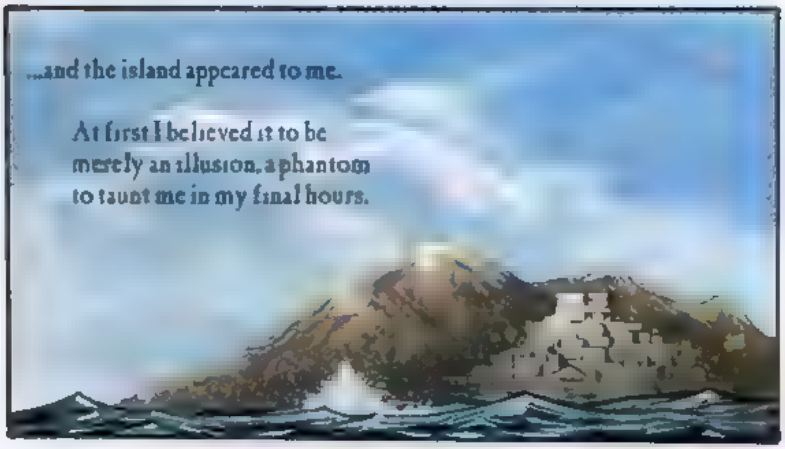
But even the things you love slip from your grasp.

I believed I was dead.

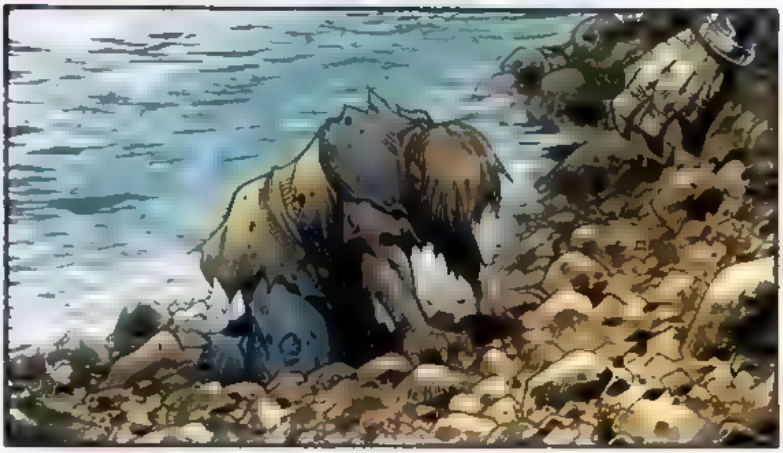
I wished I was.



The storm had passed and left me adrift and alone, clinging to a piece of flotsam. All our efforts, all our sacrifice, had come to this cruel end. I had lost even the chance to die along with Chyrizah. I had lost everything except that which held no longer any meaning for me – my own life. And then the morning fog burned away...



I struck out for the shore anyway, pushing myself toward it with whatever of my strength remained. By the time I had reached the shallows and convinced myself of the island's reality, I could pull myself no further. I was resigned that the rocks of the beach would serve to mark my grave.



All you have in this world is your own two hands.

Even now, after all I have been through, I believe that to be so.

But I also have learned there is a time to reach out and grasp other hands, hands offered in help.

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Thus Far in Scion

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YOU'RE TOO HARD ON HIM, KAI

AM I?

OR ARE *YOU* TOO READY TO EXCUSE HIM? HE'S CHOOSING HIS *IDEALISM* OVER HIS *FAMILY*, YLENA.

WHAT ABOUT MOTHER AND FATHER? THEY'VE LOST *ONE SON* ALREADY

AND NOW ETHAN DOES *THIS*.

IT MIGHT NOT BE THE DECISION YOU OR I WOULD'VE MADE, BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN *ETHAN* HAS NO RIGHT TO MAKE THAT CHOICE

HE'S HIS OWN MAN NOW, KAI. HE'S A FAR CRY FROM THE BOY WE SENT OFF TO THE TOURNAMENT ON HIS TWENTY-FIRST BIRTHDAY

HIS *OWN* MAN?

HE DIDN'T SEEM TO HAVE ANY QUALMS ABOUT TAKING UP RESIDENCE IN THE HERON COMPOUND

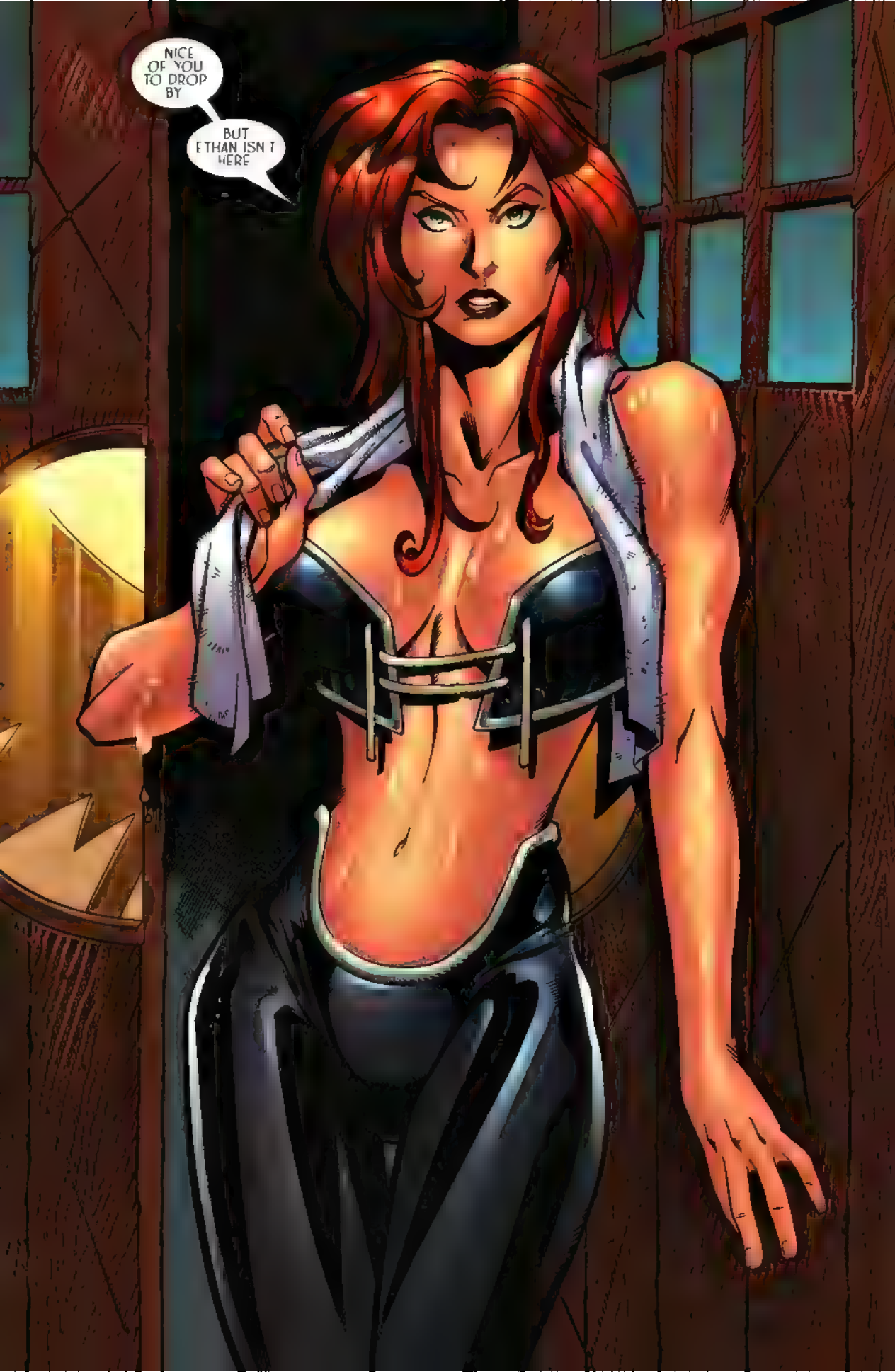
ETHAN!

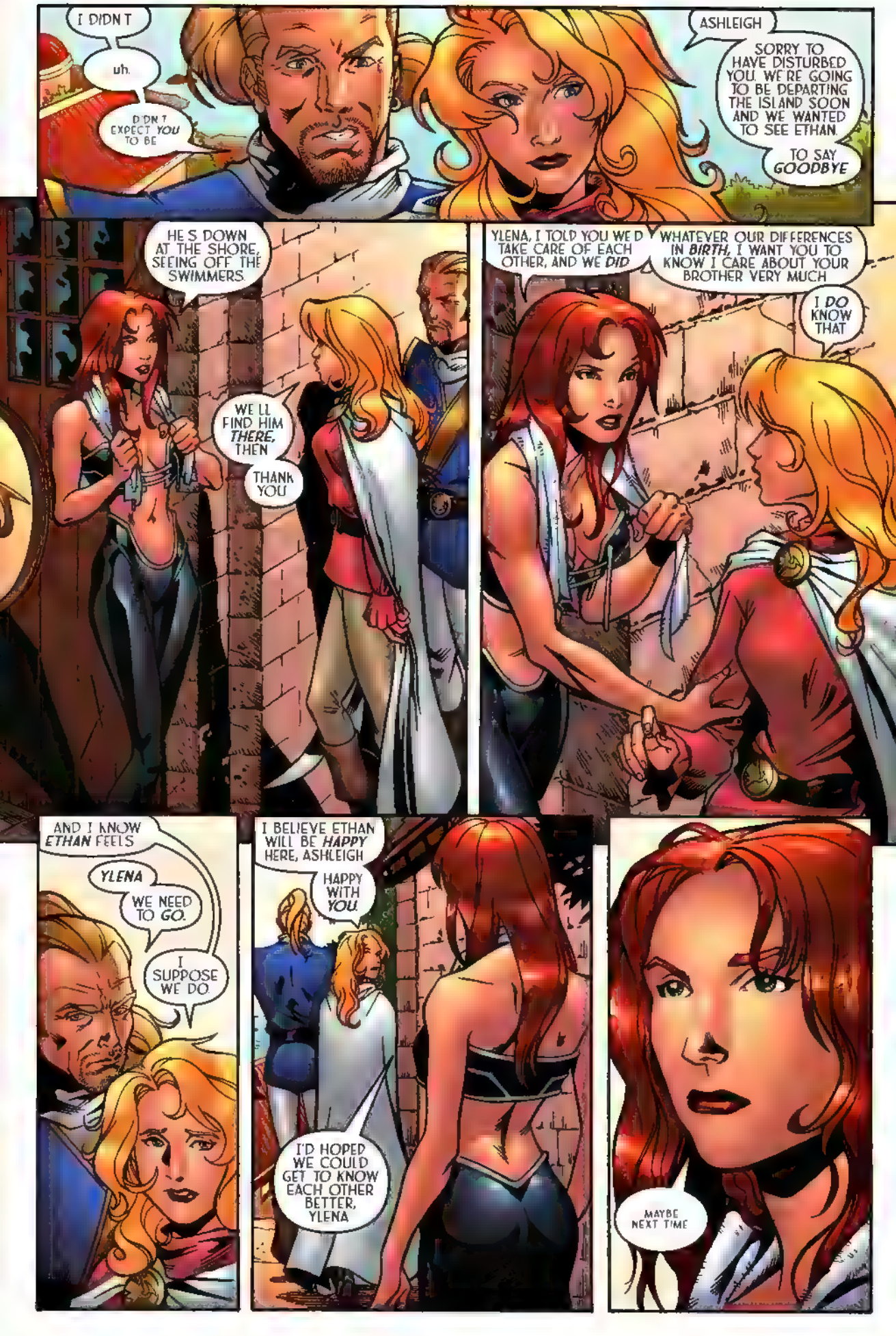
ETHAN, *OPEN UP!* IT'S TIME WE

WHUMP

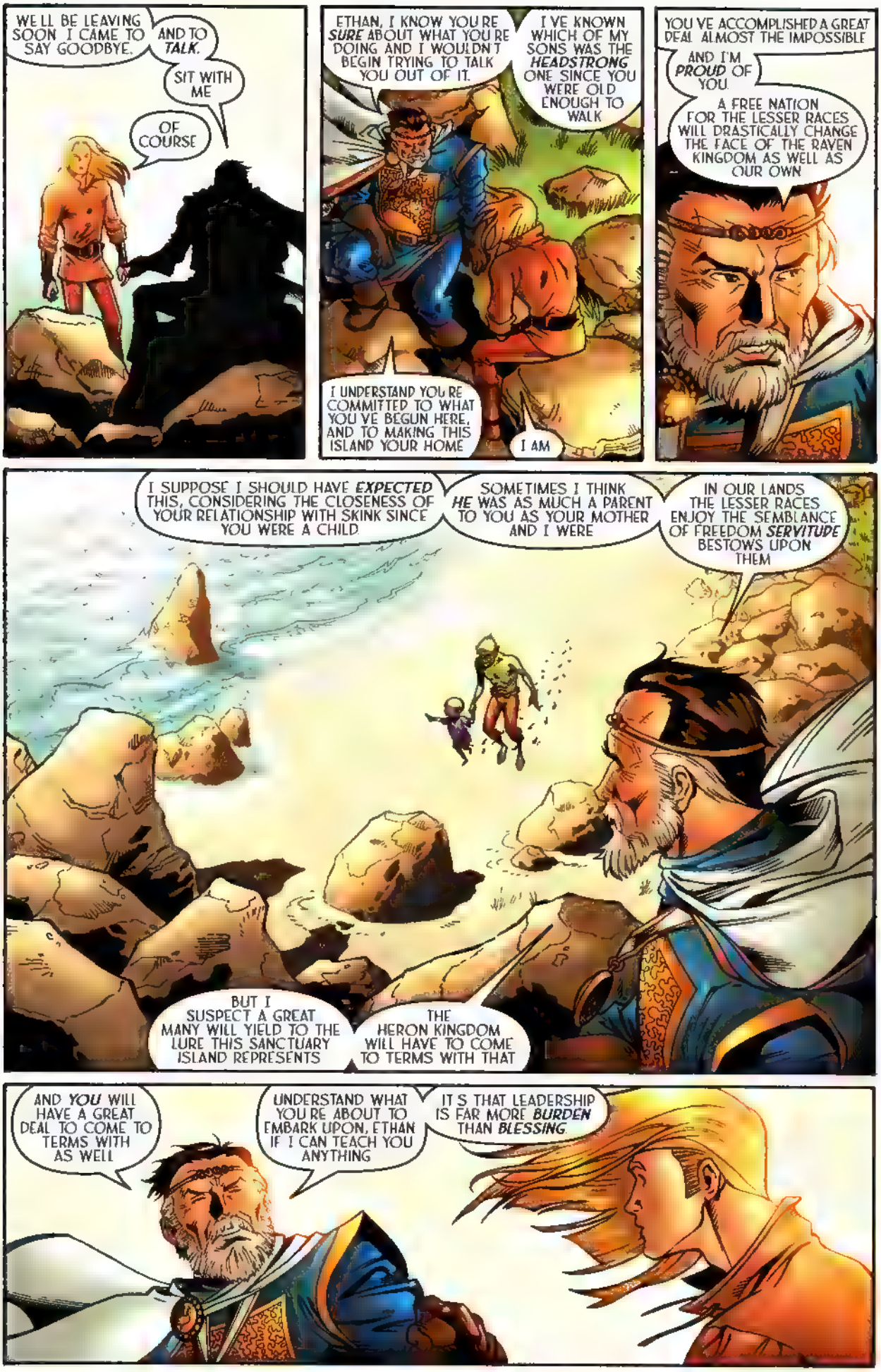
WE

GOOD MORNING, KAI


NICE OF YOU TO DROP BY
BUT ETHAN ISN'T HERE

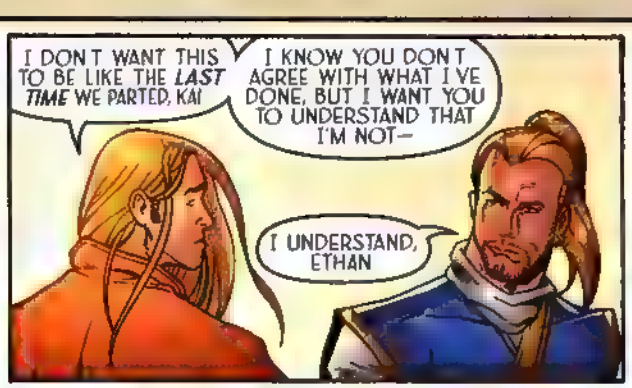

I DIDN T
uh.
D DN T EXPECT YOU TO BE
ASHLEIGH
SORRY TO HAVE DISTURBED YOU. WE RE GOING TO BE DEPARTING THE ISLAND SOON AND WE WANTED TO SEE ETHAN.
TO SAY GOODBYE
HE S DOWN AT THE SHORE, SEEING OFF THE SWIMMERS.
WE LL FIND HIM THERE, THEN
THANK YOU
YLENA, I TOLD YOU WE D TAKE CARE OF EACH OTHER, AND WE DID
WHATEVER OUR DIFFERENCES IN BIRTH, I WANT YOU TO KNOW I CARE ABOUT YOUR BROTHER VERY MUCH
I DO KNOW THAT
AND I KNOW ETHAN FEELS
YLENA
WE NEED TO GO.
I SUPPOSE WE DO.
I BELIEVE ETHAN WILL BE HAPPY HERE, ASHLEIGH
HAPPY WITH YOU.
I'D HOPED WE COULD GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER BETTER, YLENA
MAYBE NEXT TIME

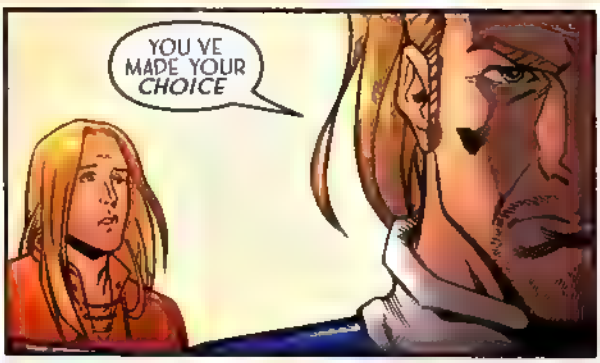
WE'RE IN YOUR DEBT.
WE NEVER COULD HAVE ACCOMPLISHED THIS WITHOUT YOU.
DON'T FOOL YOURSELF, ETHAN
...FOUNDING A KINGDOM IS THE EASY PART. THE TRICK IS KEEPING ONE
FATHER


WE'LL BE LEAVING SOON. I CAME TO SAY GOODBYE.
AND TO *TALK*.
SIT WITH ME
OF COURSE
ETHAN, I KNOW YOU'RE *SURE* ABOUT WHAT YOU'RE DOING AND I WOULDN'T BEGIN TRYING TO TALK YOU OUT OF IT.
I'VE KNOWN WHICH OF MY SONS WAS THE *HEADSTRONG* ONE SINCE YOU WERE OLD ENOUGH TO WALK
I UNDERSTAND YOU'RE COMMITTED TO WHAT YOU'VE BEGUN HERE, AND TO MAKING THIS ISLAND YOUR HOME
I AM
YOU'VE ACCOMPLISHED A GREAT DEAL. ALMOST THE IMPOSSIBLE
AND I'M *PROUD* OF YOU.
A FREE NATION FOR THE LESSER RACES WILL DRASTICALLY CHANGE THE FACE OF THE RAVEN KINGDOM AS WELL AS OUR OWN
I SUPPOSE I SHOULD HAVE *EXPECTED* THIS, CONSIDERING THE CLOSENESS OF YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH SKINK SINCE YOU WERE A CHILD.
SOMETIMES I THINK *HE* WAS AS MUCH A PARENT TO YOU AS YOUR MOTHER AND I WERE
IN OUR LANDS THE LESSER RACES ENJOY THE SEMBLANCE OF FREEDOM *SERVITUDE* BESTOWS UPON THEM
BUT I SUSPECT A GREAT MANY WILL YIELD TO THE LURE THIS SANCTUARY ISLAND REPRESENTS
THE HERON KINGDOM WILL HAVE TO COME TO TERMS WITH THAT
AND *YOU* WILL HAVE A GREAT DEAL TO COME TO TERMS WITH AS WELL
UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU'RE ABOUT TO EMBARK UPON, ETHAN IF I CAN TEACH YOU ANYTHING
IT'S THAT LEADERSHIP IS FAR MORE *BURDEN* THAN *BLESSING*.

YOU ARE THEIR *SAVIOR* NOW, MY SON BUT YOU ARE NOT *ONE* OF THEM
WHAT WILL YOU BE TO THEM IN A *MONTH*, OR A *YEAR*, SAVE A REMINDER OF THEIR FORMER MASTERS?
ONCE THIS EUPHORIA OF FREEDOM PASSES, YOU WILL ALL BE LEFT WITH THE REALITY OF HOW YOU WILL LIVE YOUR LIVES HERE.
HOW DO YOU EVEN KNOW THEY WILL *ACCEPT* YOU?
I NEVER THOUGHT IT WOULD BE *EASY*
IT WON'T BE.
YOU'VE LED THEM TO THEIR PROMISED LAND
BUT THIS ISLAND WASN'T BUILT TO BE INHABITED YEAR ROUND. IT WAS BUILT TO BE POPULATED BUT A FORTNIGHT A YEAR
HOW WILL YOU FEED THEM, CLOTHE THEM, SHELTER THEM?
THESE ARE CIRCUMSTANCES I HAVE NEVER FACED, AND I AM NOT SO PRESUMPTUOUS TO BELIEVE I KNOW HOW TO ADVISE YOU.
BUT I WILL TELL YOU *THIS*.
YOU ARE MY SON, AND IF THERE IS A WAY TO MAKE THIS DREAM WORK, I KNOW *YOU* WILL FIND IT
I LOVE YOU MORE THAN LIFE ITSELF, ETHAN. I LOVE YOU ENOUGH TO *LET YOU GO*.
THANK YOU, FATHER
I LOVE YOU TOO
THE GIRL? ASHLEIGH?
SHE'S THAT IMPORTANT TO YOU?
MORE THAN I CAN SAY
SHE OPENED MY EYES TO SO MUCH
I CAN HARDLY BELIEVE SHE AND BRON SPRANG FROM THE SAME SIRE
IT *WEIGHS* ON ME, NOT KNOWING FOR CERTAIN IF BRON PERISHED
NOT KNOWING IF I WAS ABLE TO AVENGE ARTOR
YOUR MOTHER IS MORE CONCERNED WITH *YOU* THAN YOUR *VOW*. SHE IS RELIEVED, BUT *ANXIOUS* TO SEE YOU
I WANT YOU TO *VISIT* AS SOON AS YOU ARE ABLE
I WILL
FATHER, WHAT ABOUT KAI AND YLENA? WITH EVERYTHING THAT'S HAPPENED

I'M AFRAID THINGS MIGHT STILL BE AWKWARD BETWEEN US.
TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF, LITTLE BROTHER
I CAN'T SAY THIS IS HOW I EXPECTED THINGS TO TURN OUT, BUT YOU'VE NEVER LACKED FOR *SURPRISES*, HAVE YOU?
JUST MAKE SURE YOU DON'T FORGET WHERE YOUR *TRUE* HOME IS
AND MAKE SURE YOU *VISIT*
I *WILL*, YLENA!
I ALREADY PROMISED FATHER


I DON'T WANT THIS TO BE LIKE THE *LAST TIME* WE PARTED, KAI
I KNOW YOU DON'T AGREE WITH WHAT I'VE DONE, BUT I WANT YOU TO UNDERSTAND THAT I'M NOT—
I UNDERSTAND, ETHAN


YOU'VE MADE YOUR *CHOICE*

KAI
KAI!
GIVE YOUR BROTHER *TIME*, ETHAN HE'LL COME AROUND
REMEMBER YOU WILL *ALWAYS* BE A PART OF THIS FAMILY
I KNOW THAT, FATHER

BUT RIGHT NOW IT SEEMS LIKE I'M *APART* FROM MY FAMILY
ETHAN?
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
I FEEL AS THOUGH
, AS THOUGH SOMETHING'S *ENDED*, SKINK. SOMETHING I'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO GET BACK
SOME THINGS MUST *END* IN ORDER FOR OTHERS TO *BEGIN*
YOU'VE PASSED ONE MARKER ALONG YOUR JOURNEY THERE WILL BE OTHERS AHEAD
I JUST WISH I KNEW WHERE THIS *JOURNEY* WAS GOING
THE MARK YOU BEAR HAS CHANGED YOUR LIFE, ETHAN
IT'S CHANGED *YOUR* DESTINY AS WELL AS THAT OF ALL *AVALON*.
MAYBE
BUT THIS THING ON MY ARM *STARTED* THE WAR AND HELPED ME *END* IT
AND I *STILL* DON'T KNOW WHAT IT IS OR WHERE IT CAME FROM
PERHAPS THE ANSWERS ARE UNKNOWN TO YOU BECAUSE THOSE ARE NOT THE *QUESTIONS* YOU SHOULD BE ASKING
BETTER YOU SHOULD ASK WHAT YOU CAN *ACCOMPLISH* WITH WHAT YOU'VE BEEN GIVEN

YOU SEEM LIKE YOU KNOW MORE THAN YOU'RE SAYING, SKINK. TRUTHFULLY
,YOU *USUALLY* SEEM LIKE YOU KNOW MORE THAN YOU'RE SAYING
I SIMPLY TRY TO BE A VOICE OF REASON WHEN YOU MIGHT NEED TO HEAR ONE, ETHAN
I'VE TRIED TO BE A *GUIDE*, I SUPPOSE YOU'D CALL IT, TO YOU EVER SINCE YOU WERE A CHILD
IF I'VE DONE THAT DUTY WELL ENOUGH, THERE WILL COME A TIME WHEN YOU DON'T NEED ME AT ALL
THERE ARE TIMES I THINK I KNOW YOU COMPLETELY
AND OTHER TIMES I DON'T THINK I KNOW YOU AT ALL
DON'T BE SILLY, ETHAN SURELY *YOU* KNOW ME BETTER THAN ANY
THERE *IS* SOMETHING I NEED TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT. THE REFUGEES ARE BEGINNING TO WONDER WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS FOR THEM
THEY'RE WAITING FOR *YOU* TO GIVE THEM DIRECTION.
ALL RIGHT
I KNEW THIS WOULD BE COMING HAVE THEM GATHER IN THE ARENA
LET'S SEE IF I CAN GIVE THEM WHAT THEY'RE LOOKING FOR

I GUESS THIS REALLY ISN'T THE TIME TO *ADMIT* IT

BUT I'M NOT COMFORTABLE WITH THIS *AT ALL*.

THEY'RE EXPECTING *ANSWERS* FROM ME, AND I REALLY DON'T *HAVE* ANY

ASHLEIGH, MAYBE *YOU'RE* BETTER SUITED TO THIS. THEY *KNOW* YOU, YOU WERE WITH THE UNDERGROUND BEFORE I EVER WAS

ETHAN, *YOU* WERE THE ONE WHO DARED TAKE THIS ISLAND AWAY FROM THE KINGDOMS.

YOU WERE THE ONE WHO SEPARATED THE FLEETS

YOU WERE THE ONE WHO PROVED TO BE THEIR *SAVIOR*

AND *YOU'RE* THE ONE THEY WANT

I KNOW

I KNOW

JUST TELL THEM WHAT'S IN YOUR *HEART*

THEY'RE GROWING *RESTLESS*, ETHAN

WE SHOULD GET OUT THERE

THIS *IS* WHAT WE WANTED, RIGHT?

RIGHT.

...THIS IS WHAT WE WANTED

HERE HE COMES!
YOU HAVE BEEN SO VERY PATIENT, AND I THANK YOU FOR THAT.
I KNOW YOU'VE BEEN WAITING FOR ANSWERS, AND I WISH
...I WISH I COULD TELL YOU I KNEW WHAT THOSE ANSWERS ARE
YOU'VE RISKED EVERYTHING TO JOURNEY HERE IN HOPES OF BUILDING A NEW LIFE
...A BETTER LIFE THAN THE ONE OFFERED BY THE SHACKLES YOU LEFT BEHIND
YOUR COURAGE IS EXTRAORDINARY
WE'VE ACCOMPLISHED SO MUCH ALREADY. WE'VE CARVED A NEW HOME FOR OURSELVES
BUT WE'VE MADE ONLY THE FIRST STEP ON THIS JOURNEY

NOW THAT WE'VE COME TO THIS SANCTUARY
WE MUST DECIDE HOW WE'RE GOING TO LIVE HERE
MOST OF YOU HAVE KNOWN ONLY SLAVERY. YOU'VE GRASPED FREEDOM, AND IT'S LED TO UNCERTAINTY
HOW WILL WE SURVIVE?
HOW WILL WE FEED OURSELVES, SHELTER OURSELVES?
WHAT SORT OF SOCIETY WILL WE BUILD? AND WHO WILL LEAD US?
I DON'T KNOW
ALL THIS IS AS NEW TO ME AS IT IS TO YOU, EVEN THOUGH THE LIFE I KNEW WAS THE FARTHEST THING IMAGINABLE FROM THAT OF A SLAVE
I CAME FROM A LIFE OF ROYAL LUXURY, OF BEING SERVED RATHER THAN SERVING.
BUT HERE ON THIS ISLAND
IN THIS PLACE WHERE CENTURIES AGO THE FIRST PEACE BETWEEN THE RAVENS AND HERONS WAS FORGED OUT OF DESPERATE NECESSITY
HERE I AM, NO DIFFERENT THAN YOU.
I, TOO, AM A REFUGEE. I FEEL THE SAME UNCERTAINTIES THAT YOU DO
I DON'T KNOW WHAT THE ANSWERS ARE
BUT I KNOW WE WILL DISCOVER THEM TOGETHER IF WE

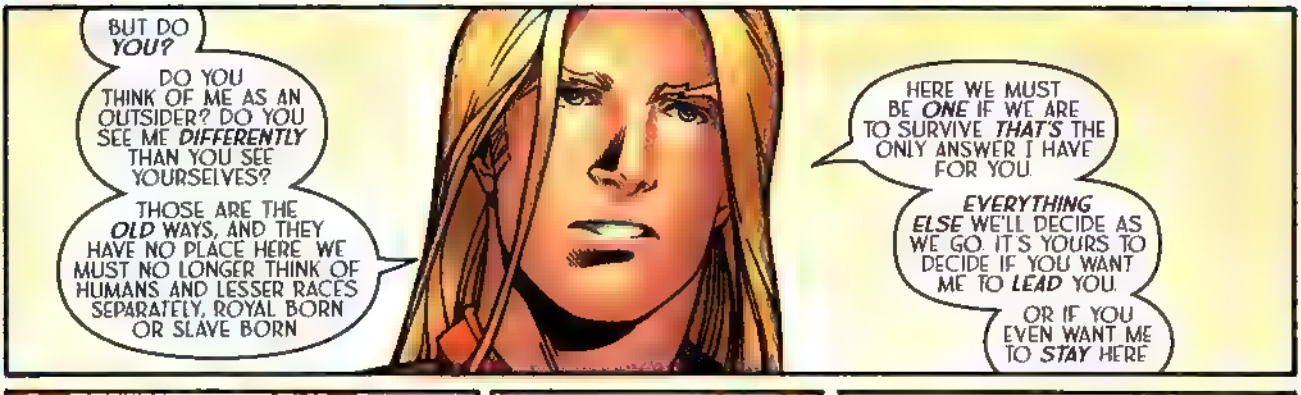
NNGH!
THUK
ETHAN!
ETHAN!
AAGH!
THUK
THERE!

DEATH
TO THE MASTERS!
WE DON'T WANT YOUR KIND ANYMORE!
YOU...
...YOU WERE THERE ON THE DAY WE TOOK THIS ISLAND.
YOU FOUGHT AT MY SIDE!
YOU LATER...
NNH!

THE PRINCE DIES FIRST
NNNH
MAKE YOU FEEL SUPERIOR? THE GREAT HUMAN FATHER LOOKING AFTER HIS LESSER CHILDREN?
WE DIDN'T THROW OFF OUR CHAINS SO WE COULD CALL YOU MASTER
NO HUMAN WILL EVER SET FOOT ON THIS SOIL
YOU'RE SO BLIND
EEAGH!
I'M SORRY
ASHLEIGH?
I'M
...I'M ALL RIGHT
YOU?
HURTS
BUT I'VE HAD WORSE, HAVEN'T I?
ETHAN, YOU CAN'T LET THAT HAPPEN
EVERYTHING WILL BE RUINED.
NO

EXETER, NO!
THIS ISN'T GOING TO BE OUR WAY
HE TRIED TO KILL YOU, ETHAN. YOU CAN'T ACTUALLY ALLOW HIM TO SURVIVE
IDEALISM IS A PLEASANT CONCEIT, BUT YOU MUST BE PRAGMATIC IF YOU EVER INTEND TO BE -
NO.
I WILL NOT HAVE THIS KINGDOM FOUNDED UPON AN EXECUTION. TAKE HIM TO THE SHORE, PUT HIM IN A BOAT, EXILE HIM
BUT I WON'T HAVE HIM KILLED. DO YOU UNDERSTAND ME?
I UNDERSTAND YOU BETTER THAN YOU KNOW, ETHAN
I SPIT ON YOUR FALSE MERCY, HUMAN!
YOU LACK EVEN THE COURAGE TO SLAY ME!
ENOUGH
NH
I'LL SEND HIM ON HIS WAY
AND I'LL
NF
DO WHAT I HAVE TO DO

YOU *HEARD* HIM, DIDN'T YOU? HE SAID YOU DIDN'T THROW OFF YOUR CHAINS SO YOU COULD CALL ME MASTER
I KNOW THAT


BUT DO *YOU*?
DO YOU THINK OF ME AS AN OUTSIDER? DO YOU SEE ME *DIFFERENTLY* THAN YOU SEE YOURSELVES?
THOSE ARE THE *OLD* WAYS, AND THEY HAVE NO PLACE HERE. WE MUST NO LONGER THINK OF HUMANS AND LESSER RACES SEPARATELY, ROYAL BORN OR SLAVE BORN
HERE WE MUST BE *ONE* IF WE ARE TO SURVIVE. *THAT'S* THE ONLY ANSWER I HAVE FOR YOU.
EVERYTHING ELSE WE'LL DECIDE AS WE GO. IT'S YOURS TO DECIDE IF YOU WANT ME TO *LEAD* YOU.
OR IF YOU EVEN WANT ME TO *STAY* HERE

ETHAN!

ETHAN!
ETHAN!
ETHAN!

ETHAN! ETHAN!
ETHAN! ETHAN!
ETHAN!

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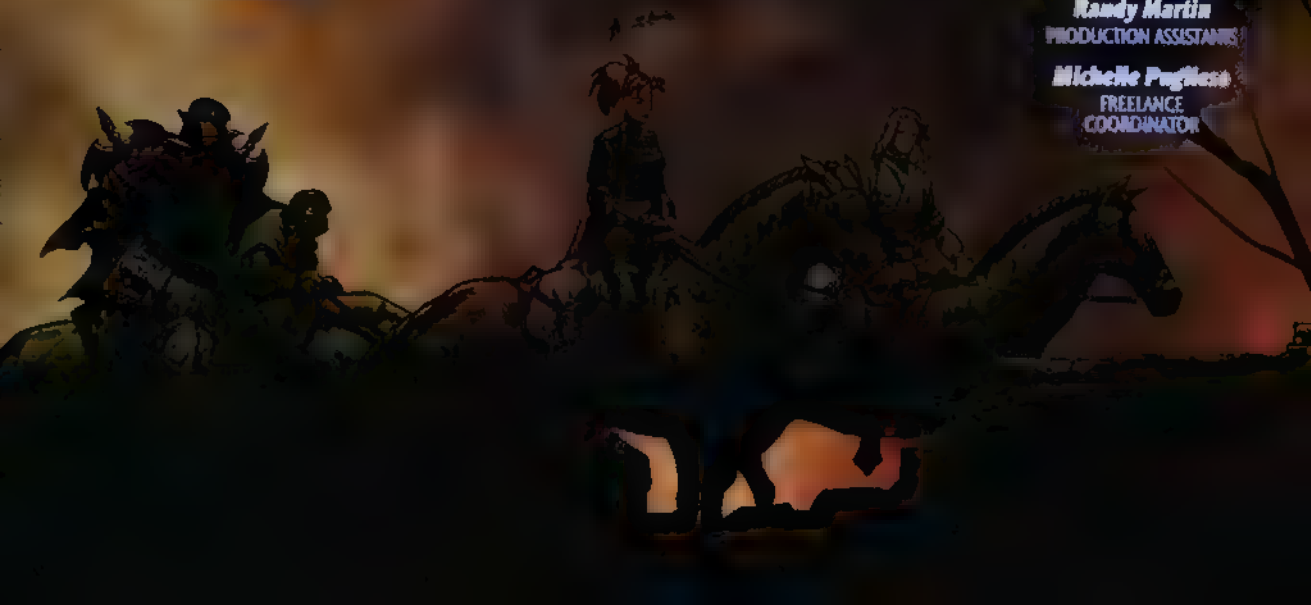

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DEADSHOT

Thus Far in Scion

What started with a mysterious sigil led to war. Prince Ethan of the West-ruling Heron Dynasty was graced with a mark granting him power, leading to the accidental scarring of Prince Bron of the East-ruling Raven Dynasty during ritual combat.

War between the kingdoms followed, but as the conflict raged, Ethan pledged his loyalty to the Underground movement dedicated to freeing the genetically engineered Lesser Races. His companion in this was Ashleigh, Raven princess and sister to Bron. Eventually the two gave in to their mutual attraction and became lovers.

Ethan and a small band of followers, including his sidekick Skink, the bounty hunter Exeter, and Nadia, a traveler from the far kingdom of Tigris, took control of the Tournament Isle. The island, located in the Great Sea between Raven and Heron lands, became a sanctuary for the Lesser Races. When the fleets of both kingdoms converged on the Isle, Ethan used his power to end their conflict and apparently slay Bron.

Now Ethan and Ashleigh face the challenges of maintaining their newly-founded kingdom.

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THE PEOPLE *CRAVE* THIS, MY LORD. WHAT'S MORE, THEY *NEED* IT.
THEY HAVE BURIED TWO MONARCHS WITHIN THE LAST YEAR, DISCOVERED THEIR PRINCESS IS A MURDEROUS TRAITOR...
...AND SUFFERED THROUGH A WAR WITHOUT A VICTORY AT ITS END TO SALVE THEIR WOUNDS.
THE NOBILITY OF THE RAVEN KINGDOM IS GATHERED, THE ENTIRETY OF THE POPULACE LOOKS ON. THEY'RE READY FOR A *CELEBRATION*...

THEY RE READY TO CROWN A NEW KING, PRINCE KORT
BUT MY LORD CHAMBERLAIN DON T YOU FIND THIS ALL A BIT
OSTENTATIOUS?

I DON'T WANT TO MAKE THE WRONG IMPRESSION
ON *THIS* OF ALL DAYS
WITH ALL DUE RESPECT, MY LORD
NONSENSE
YOUR BROTHER'S REIGN WAS POPULAR, AS ARE *MOST* WARTIME REGIMES BUT IT WAS MARKED BY A CERTAIN, SHALL WE SAY, *SEVERITY?*
AN ERA ENDED WITH BRON'S DEATH. LET THE PEOPLE KNOW THIS IS A *NEW* ERA
ONE THAT BRINGS A *NEW* AND *WORTHY* MONARCH WITH IT
THE PATIENCE YOU HAVE DISPLAYED FOR SO LONG IS ABOUT TO BE REWARDED, MY LIEGE. THERE IS NO HARM IN *REVELING* IN IT
VERY WELL, CHAMBERLAIN. PERHAPS YOU'RE RIGHT
YOUR COUNSEL HAS ALWAYS SERVED ME WELL IN THE PAST
I DON'T EXPECT MY FATHER *OR* MY BROTHER TO BE FORGOTTEN

BUT I WOULD HAVE MY *CORONATION* REMEMBERED

The war is over.

The great conflict the kingdoms of the Ravens and the Herons wage upon one another has ended...

...brought to a sudden conclusion by the same man who started it.

Ethan, youngest of the Heron princes, sparked the war with an unintended slight against Raven Prince Bron in the tournament of combat contested by the kingdoms.

Ethan drew an end to the war, here where it began, by literally forcing the Ravens and Herons to lay down their arms. It also seems he slew his rival Bron.

Now Ethan has taken this island that was used for combat and made it a sanctuary.

Here, finally, the Lesser Races can live as the free beings they should be.

There's a certain irony that Ethan's companion in all this has been Bron's sister, the Princess Ashleigh.

Having broken with their respective kingdoms, they've become lovers...

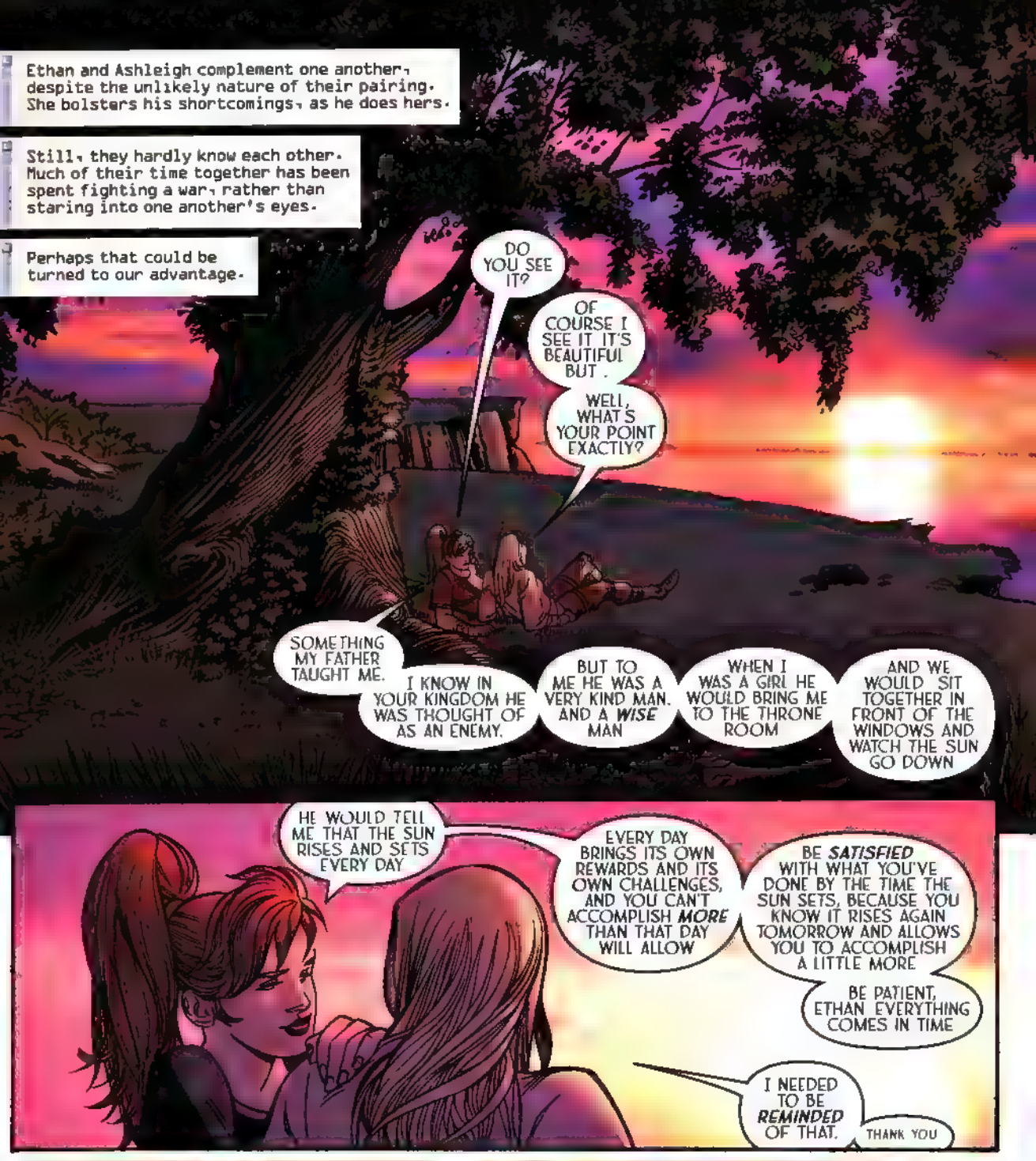
...and are attempting to lead this new kingdom of theirs, a scrap surrounded by the vastness of the Great Sea.

It has not been without its difficulties.
MINE!
NO, IT'S MINE!
I SAW IT FIRST!
YOU DIDN'T!
AND DON'T PUSH ME!
I'LL DO WORSE THAN PUSH YOU!
NOT WITH YOUR THROAT TORN OUT, YOU WON'T!
STOP IT...

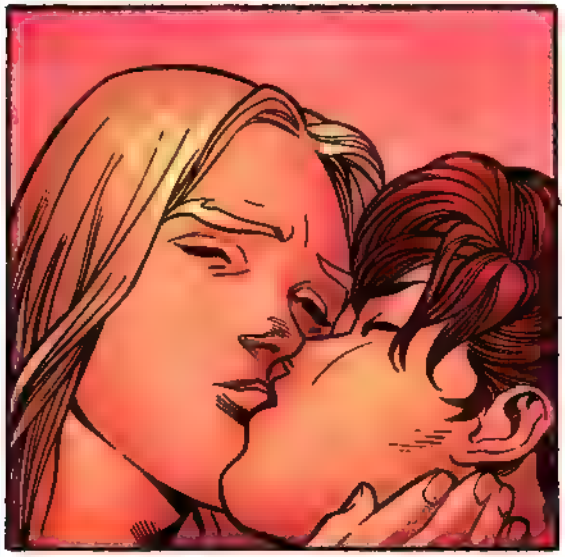
...BOTH OF YOU, STOP IT!
KING ETHAN
WHAT IS GOING ON HERE?
NO, JUST ETHAN
NOW EXPLAIN YOURSELVES WHY ARE YOU ACTING LIKE SAVAGES?
THIS HOUSE YOU SEE, I CLAIMED IT FIRST
JUST AS YOU SAID, ETHAN YOU SAID WE WERE FREE TO CLAIM WHAT PLACES THERE ARE ON THE ISLAND AND LIVE THERE
UNTRUE!
I CLAIMED IT FIRST!
AND EVEN IF I HADN'T, HE DOESN'T NEED SUCH A HOUSE AND I DO. I HAVE A WIFE AND CHILD

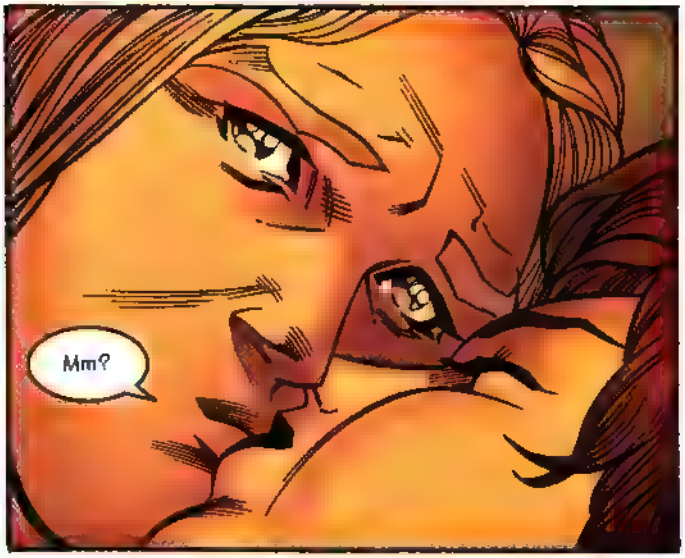
LIAR!
IT'S MINE! WHY SHOULD IT BE YOURS BECAUSE YOU HAVE A FAMILY?
I WILL HAVE A FAMILY SOMEDAY!
YOU WON'T BE ALIVE TO FATHER ONE!
ENOUGH!
YOU
YOU TRULY HAVE A WIFE AND CHILD HERE?
I DO
THEN THE HOUSE IS YOURS I DON'T CARE WHO CLAIMED IT FIRST
I'M SORRY, BUT HIS NEED IS GREATER YOU'LL HAVE TO FIND OTHER LODGINGS
AS YOU WISH
YOU CAME TO THIS ISLAND TO LIVE FREE, TO HAVE A BETTER LIFE. ACT LIKE YOU VALUE IT
I WILL HAVE NO MORE OF THIS PETTY SQUABBLING IS THAT UNDERSTOOD?
YES, ETHAN
YES

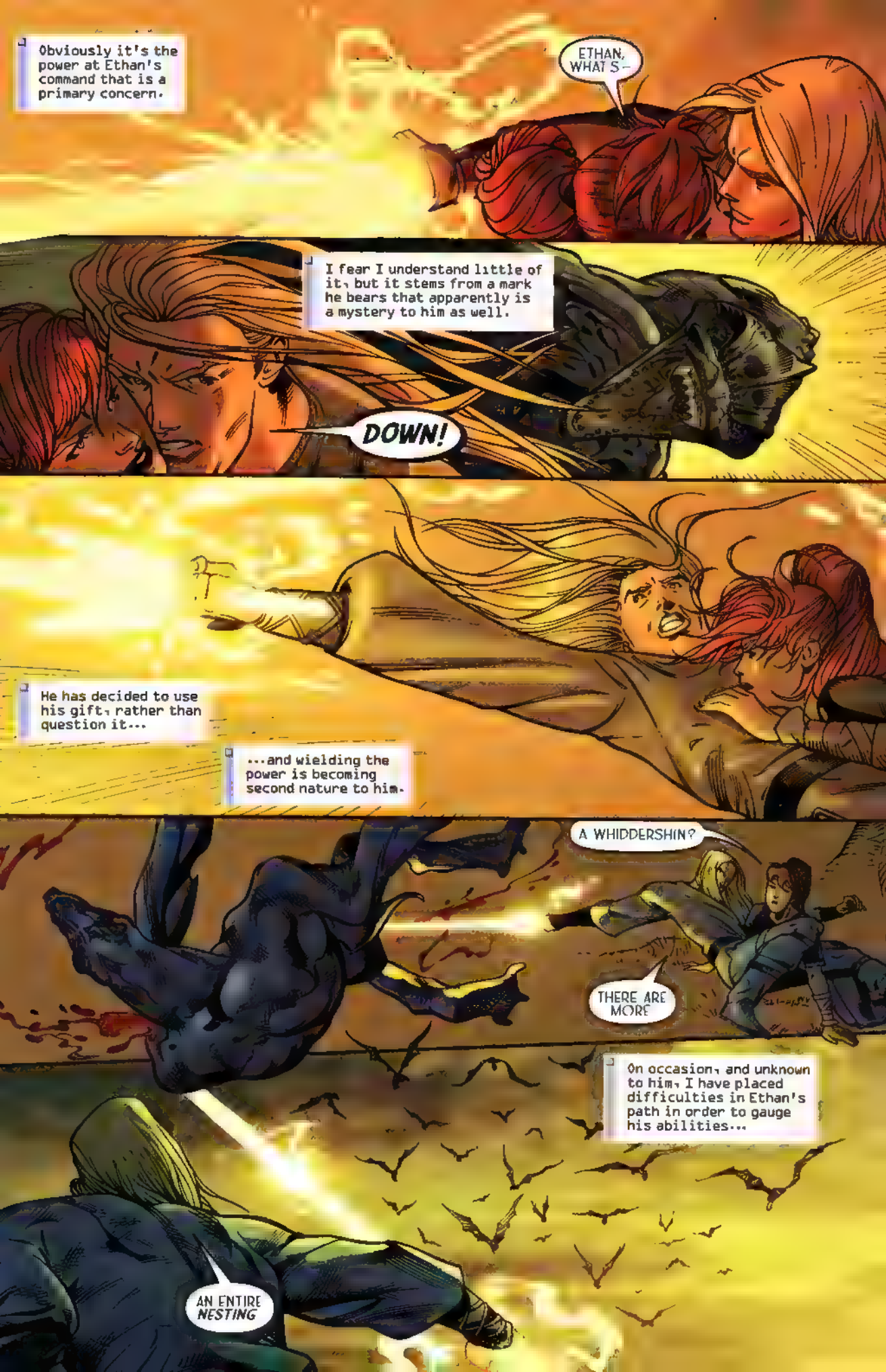
I believe leadership comes naturally to Ethan. Or at least it will when he truly matures.
The responsibility of it weighs heavily upon him already.
ETHAN?
NEVER GOING TO WORK
ETHAN.
IT WAS ONLY AN ARGUMENT DON'T TAKE IT TO MEAN MORE THAN THAT
WHY NOT?
ASHLEIGH, HOW ARE WE EVER GOING TO MAKE THIS COME TOGETHER?
WE'RE TRYING TO MAKE THE SANCTUARY ISLE INTO A FREE KINGDOM THAT CAN SUPPORT ITSELF
BUT MOST OF THE POPULATION HAS NEVER KNOWN FREEDOM AND THEY'RE EXPECTING US TO LEAD THEM
NONE OF US KNOWS HOW TO DO THIS
BUT WE WILL.
HAVE YOU ALWAYS BEEN THIS IMPATIENT? WE'VE BEEN HERE WHAT, A LITTLE MORE THAN A MONTH?
GIVE IT TIME, ETHAN
COME WITH ME
I NEED TO SHOW YOU SOMETHING

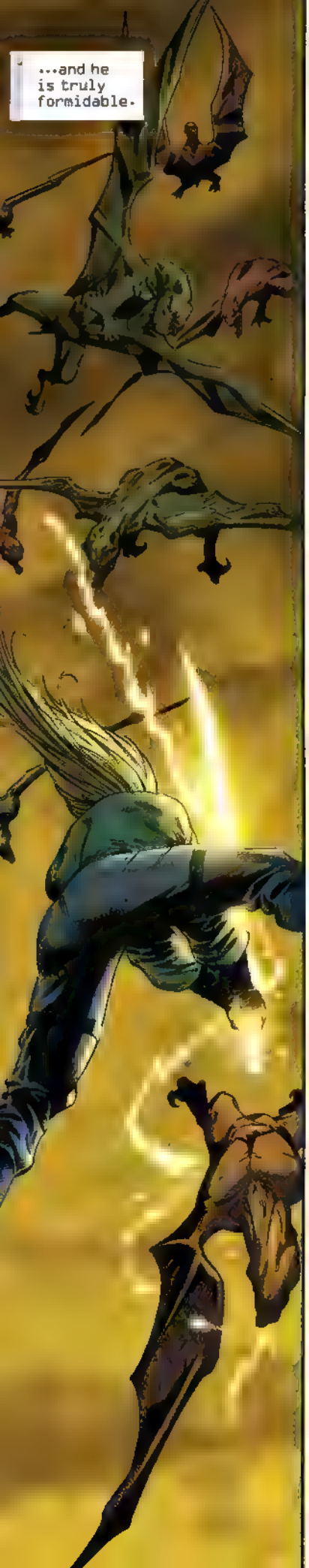

Ethan and Ashleigh complement one another, despite the unlikely nature of their pairing. She bolsters his shortcomings, as he does hers.
Still, they hardly know each other. Much of their time together has been spent fighting a war, rather than staring into one another's eyes.
Perhaps that could be turned to our advantage.
DO YOU SEE IT?
OF COURSE I SEE IT. IT'S BEAUTIFUL. BUT...
WELL, WHAT'S YOUR POINT EXACTLY?
SOMETHING MY FATHER TAUGHT ME.
I KNOW IN YOUR KINGDOM HE WAS THOUGHT OF AS AN ENEMY.
BUT TO ME HE WAS A VERY KIND MAN. AND A *WISE* MAN
WHEN I WAS A GIRL HE WOULD BRING ME TO THE THRONE ROOM
AND WE WOULD SIT TOGETHER IN FRONT OF THE WINDOWS AND WATCH THE SUN GO DOWN

HE WOULD TELL ME THAT THE SUN RISES AND SETS EVERY DAY
EVERY DAY BRINGS ITS OWN REWARDS AND ITS OWN CHALLENGES, AND YOU CAN'T ACCOMPLISH *MORE* THAN THAT DAY WILL ALLOW
BE *SATISFIED* WITH WHAT YOU'VE DONE BY THE TIME THE SUN SETS, BECAUSE YOU KNOW IT RISES AGAIN TOMORROW AND ALLOWS YOU TO ACCOMPLISH A LITTLE MORE
BE PATIENT, ETHAN. EVERYTHING COMES IN TIME
I NEEDED TO BE *REMINDED* OF THAT.
THANK YOU




Mm?

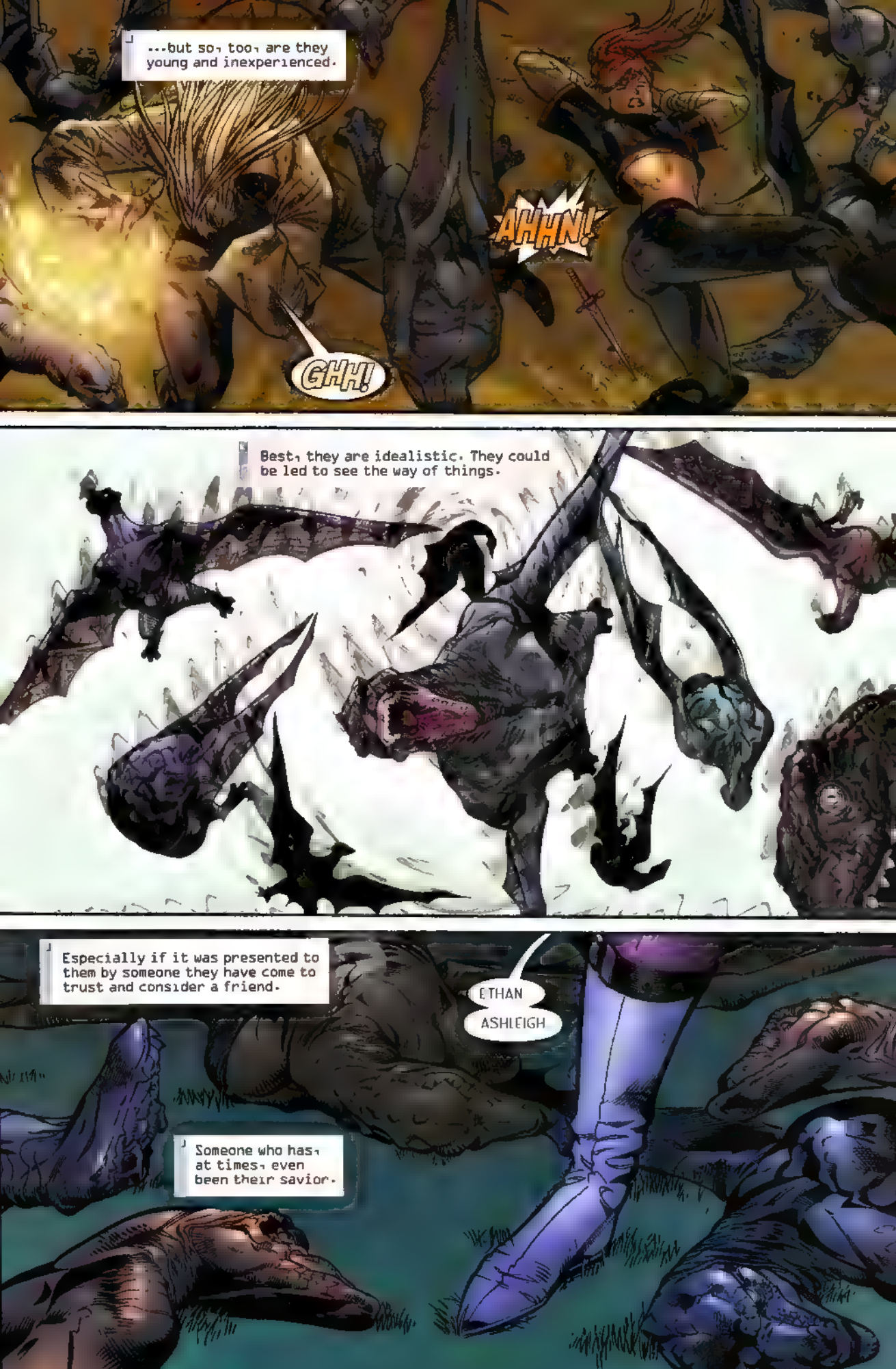

Obviously it's the power at Ethan's command that is a primary concern.
ETHAN, WHAT S–
I fear I understand little of it, but it stems from a mark he bears that apparently is a mystery to him as well.
DOWN!
He has decided to use his gift, rather than question it...
...and wielding the power is becoming second nature to him.
A WHIDDERSHIN?
THERE ARE MORE
On occasion, and unknown to him, I have placed difficulties in Ethan's path in order to gauge his abilities...
AN ENTIRE NESTING


...and he is truly formidable.

Though she is not blessed with the power that he is, Ashleigh is easily as capable.

She will stand at his side. Always.

They are to be reckoned with, both of them...
AGH!
THERE ARE TOO MANY!


...but so, too, are they young and inexperienced.
AHHN!
GHH!
Best, they are idealistic. They could be led to see the way of things.
Especially if it was presented to them by someone they have come to trust and consider a friend.
ETHAN
ASHLEIGH
Someone who has, at times, even been their savior.

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
A HIGH-FREQUENCY SIREN
WE HAVE WHIDDERSHINS IN TIGRIS AS WELL, THOUGH WE CALL THEM BY ANOTHER NAME
WE VE FOUND HIGH FREQUENCY TO BE THE MOST EFFECTIVE METHOD OF BRINGING THEM DOWN WHEN THEY SWARM
MY ARM IS FITTED WITH A SONIC GENERATOR, AMONG OTHER THINGS
I WONDER WHY THEY SWARMED LIKE THAT
DIFFICULT TO SAY
SOMETIMES IT'S BECAUSE THEIR NEST WAS INVADED. ALMOST *ANYTHING* COULD HAVE DISTURBED THEM
NADIA
YES, WE RE WE'RE FINE
THAT SOUND— DID *YOU* DO THAT? WHAT WAS IT?

WE'RE FORTUNATE YOU HAPPENED ALONG WHEN YOU DID. THANK YOU, NADIA.
I'M HAPPY TO SERVE.
WHY *DID* YOU HAPPEN ALONG, NADIA?
TRUTHFULLY, I WAS ONLY LOOKING FOR A PLACE TO ENJOY THE SUNSET MYSELF.
I'M ALWAYS HESITANT TO DISTURB THE TWO OF YOU. YOU MUST NOT GET ENOUGH PRIVACY AS IT IS.
NO.
WE *DON'T* GET ENOUGH PRIVACY.
IT'S HARD. THERE'S ALWAYS SO MUCH THAT HAS TO BE DONE FOR THE ISLAND. THERE'S NEVER ANY TIME LEFT FOR *US*.
MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT, ASHLEIGH. MAYBE I *SHOULD* LEARN A LITTLE PATIENCE.
SINCE IT'S NEARLY IMPOSSIBLE FOR US TO SPEND TIME TOGETHER *HERE*.
...AND SINCE I THINK NADIA AND EXETER CAN HANDLE THE ISLAND FOR A FEW DAYS.
...WHAT WOULD YOU THINK ABOUT GOING TO THE HERON LANDS TO VISIT MY *FAMILY*?
I was sent here to look for weakness.

We'd hoped these kingdoms would decimate one another and make themselves easy prey. They've stopped short of that. But I believe we've found powerful allies who already believe in our cause. Very soon we'll bring them into the fold.

And then this world will be ours.

DID YOU FORESEE THIS, MARIELLA?
I MEAN *TRULY*?
DID I KNOW ETHAN WOULD LEAVE US? I SUSPECTED
A MOTHER HAS A *SENSE* HE WAS ALWAYS DIFFERENT THAN OUR OTHER CHILDREN, AND NOT SIMPLY BECAUSE HE WAS THE YOUNGEST
BUT EVEN *I* COULDN'T HAVE IMAGINED THIS DESTINY ETHAN SET ASIDE HIS HERITAGE FOR ANOTHER CAUSE
AND YET I CAN'T BE TERRIBLY DISPLEASED HE'S ACCOMPLISHED GREAT THINGS
ETHAN'S CHOSEN A DIFFICULT PATH FOR HIMSELF. I PRAY HE'S EQUAL TO THE CHALLENGES AHEAD OF HIM
I TOLD HIM I WAS *PROUD* OF HIM, MARIELLA, AND I AM. PERHAPS EVEN MORE SO THAN IF HE'D REMAINED HERE.

WHAT OF KAI AND YLENA?
YLENA SEEMS ACCEPTING OF ALL THAT'S HAPPENED, BUT *YOUR* SON—
I'VE NOTICED KAI IS *USUALLY* MY SON WHEN HE'S BEING DIFFICULT
I KNOW HE'S STILL ANGRY ABOUT ETHAN'S DECISION. YLENA TOLD ME THEY DIDN'T PART WELL ON THE ISLAND
I LIKE IT NO BETTER THAN YOU THAT OUR SONS HAVE SUFFERED THIS FALLING OUT
BUT I THINK KAI'S ANGER HAS FAR MORE TO DO WITH HIS *ELDER* BROTHER THAN HIS *YOUNGER* AND I'M CERTAIN KAI DOESN'T *REALIZE* THAT
KA *IDOLIZED* ARTOR. HE'S NEVER *ACCEPTED* HIS DEATH, AND NOW HE'S DIRECTING ALL THAT FRUSTRATION AT ETHAN
WITH ARTOR *GONE*, THE RESPONSIBILITY OF SOMEDAY BECOMING KING RESTS UPON KAI'S SHOULDERS.
IT'S NOT A BURDEN HE EVER TRULY WANTED, AND NOW IT'S HIS TO BEAR
DO YOU BELIEVE HE'LL COME AROUND OF HIS OWN ACCORD?
I BELIEVE ANY MEDDLING ON OUR PART CAN ONLY *WORSEN* MATTERS
KAI AND ETHAN ARE BOTH MEN NOW, DANE. WHAT'S *BETWEEN* THEM WILL HAVE TO BE WORKED OUT *BY* THEM
YOU'RE RIGHT. YOU ALWAYS ARE
OF COURSE I AM
NOW, ARE YOU COMING IN? IT'S LATE
NO, I THINK I'LL ENJOY THE EVENING A LITTLE MORE
WE WON'T HAVE TOO MANY MORE NIGHTS LIKE THIS BEFORE THE COLD WEATHER STARTS TO SET IN
DON'T BE LONG
I WON'T

HELLO?
IS SOMEONE THERE?
IF SOMEONE'S THERE
SHOW YOURSELF

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Troy Peteri
LETTERER

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Thus Far in Scion

What started with a mysterious sigil led to war. Prince Ethan of the West-ruling Heron Dynasty was graced with a mark granting him power, leading to the accidental scarring of Prince Bron of the East-ruling Raven Dynasty during ritual combat.

War between the kingdoms followed, but as the conflict raged, Ethan pledged his loyalty to the Underground movement dedicated to freeing the genetically engineered Lesser Races. His companion in this was Ashleigh, Raven princess and sister to Bron. Eventually the two gave in to their mutual attraction and became lovers.

Ethan and a small band of followers, including his sidekick Skink, the bounty hunter Exeter, and Nadia, a traveler from the far kingdom of Tigris, took control of an island and made it a Sanctuary for the Lesser Races. Ethan then used his power to end the war and apparently slay Bron.

While Bron's brother, Kort, ascended to the throne as the new Raven king, Ethan and Ashleigh faced the challenges of turning the island into a free kingdom.

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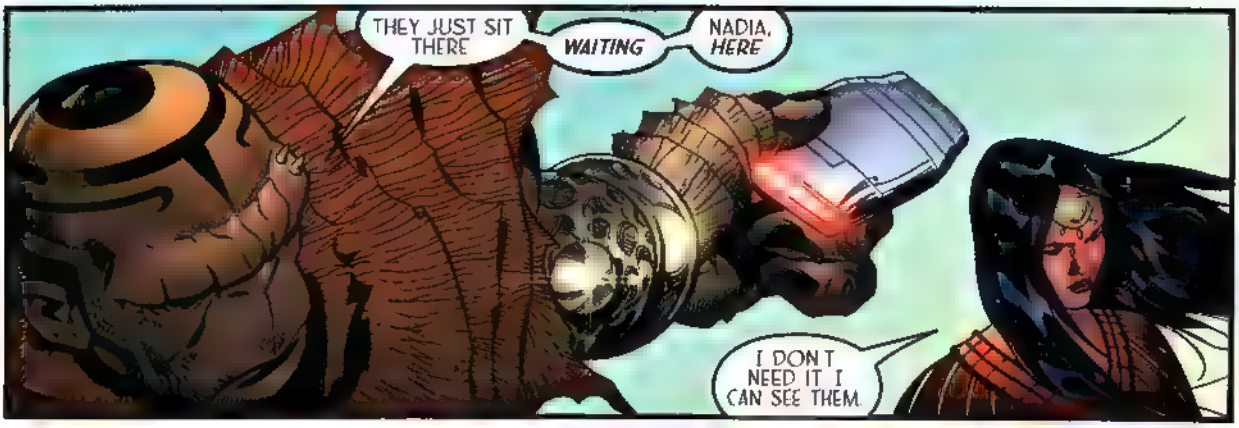
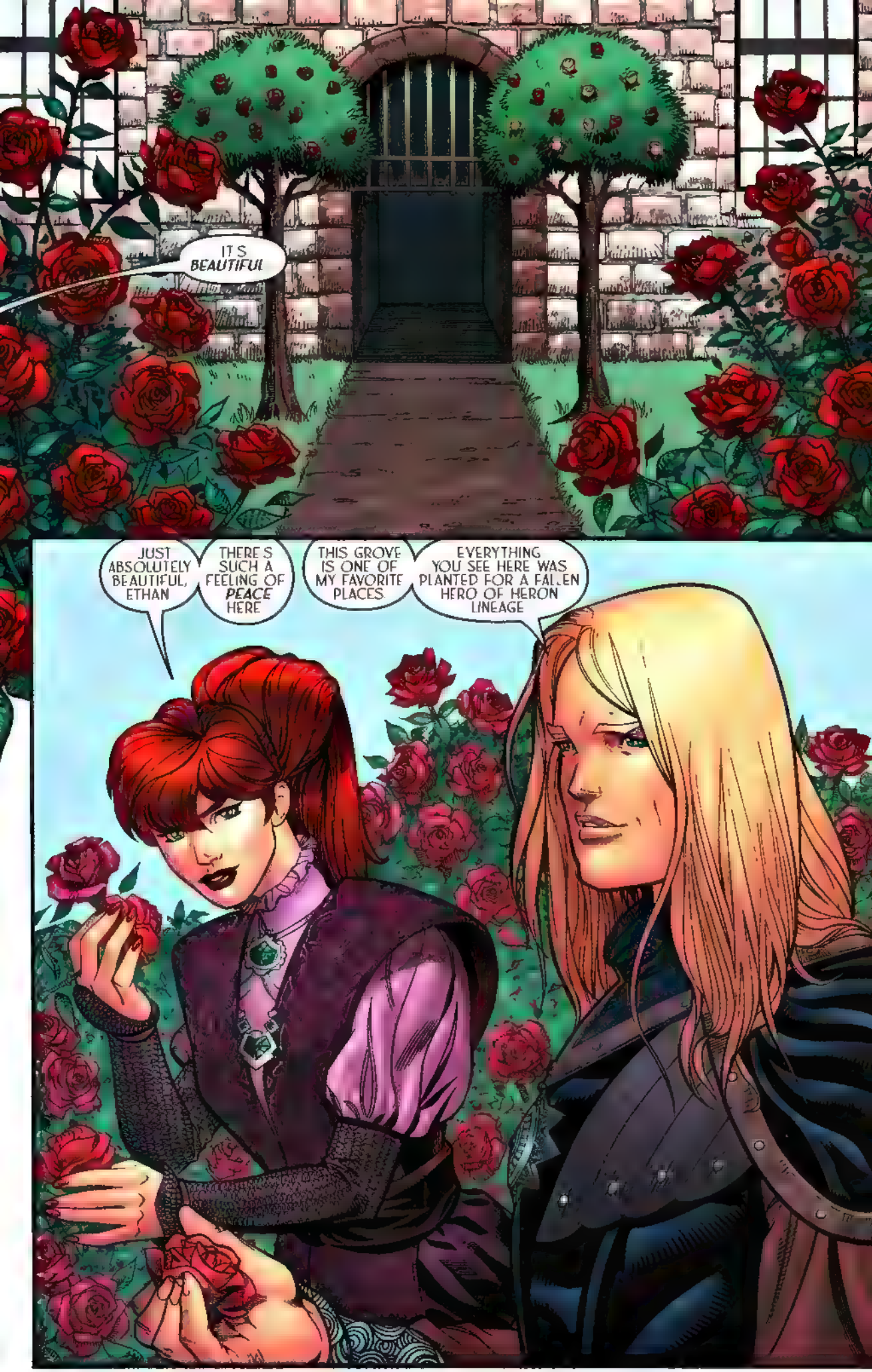
I DON'T LIKE THIS


THEY JUST SIT THERE
WAITING
NADIA, HERE
I DON'T NEED IT. I CAN SEE THEM.

WHO COULD IT BE?
THE RAVENS SO SOON?
KORT'S WORN THE CROWN BARELY A WEEK
HE DOESN'T STRIKE ME AS THAT INCAUTIOUS
SKINK?
THANK YOU, EXETER

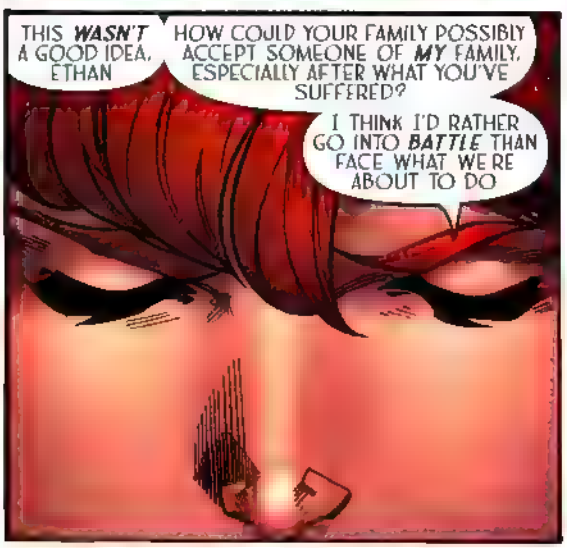
THEY'RE PATIENT, WHOEVER THEY ARE
AS WELL AS BLESSED WITH OPPORTUNE TIMING. WE'VE FAR MORE REFUGEES THAN WARRIORS UPON SANCTUARY ISLE
WITH ETHAN AND ASHLEIGH GONE TO HERON LANDS TO VISIT HIS PARENTS

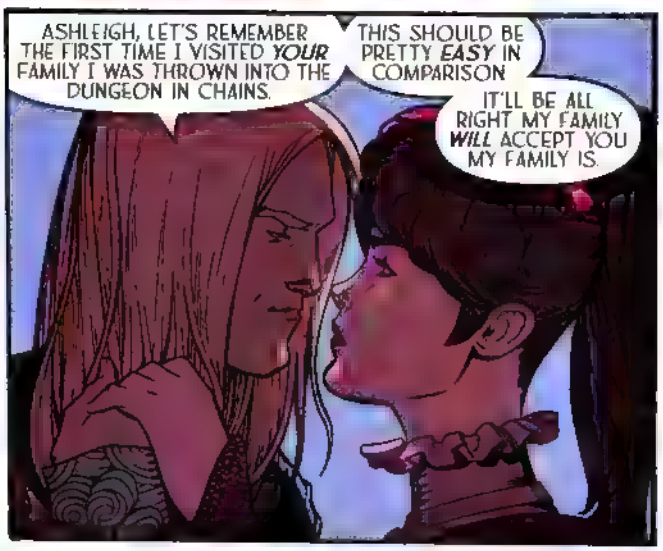
WE'RE SUDDENLY QUITE VULNERABLE.


IT'S BEAUTIFUL
JUST ABSOLUTELY BEAUTIFUL, ETHAN
THERE'S SUCH A FEELING OF PEACE HERE
THIS GROVE IS ONE OF MY FAVORITE PLACES
EVERYTHING YOU SEE HERE WAS PLANTED FOR A FALLEN HERO OF HERON LINEAGE

IT'S MEANT TO REMIND US THAT THEIR SPIRITS LIVE ON AND ARE ALL AROUND US
IT'S A LOVELY TRADITION
THE RAVENS ERECT STATUES TO THEIR HEROES, BUT THEY ALWAYS SEEMED SO *COLD* TO ME NOT LIKE *THIS*
NOT *ALIVE*

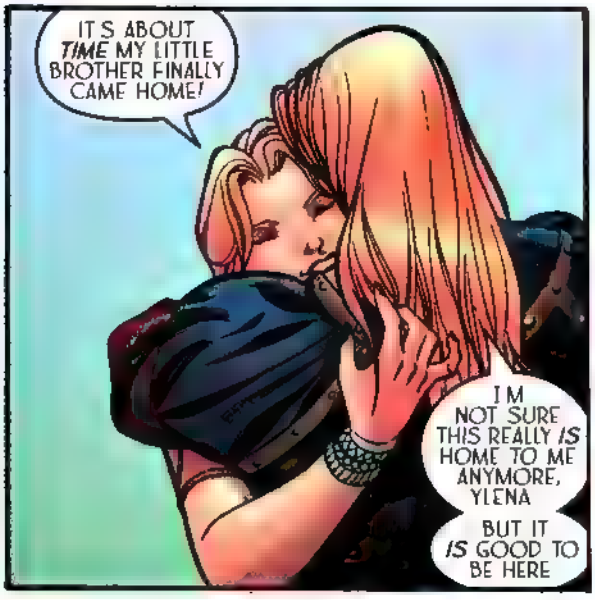
THIS ONE WAS PLANTED IN MEMORY OF MY BROTHER, ARTOR
ARTOR HE WAS THE ONE WHO WAS
SLAIN AT POINT KORDAY, YES
ETHAN, I M SORRY
I M SORRY I NEVER MET HIM SORRY WHAT HAPPENED
HAPPENED

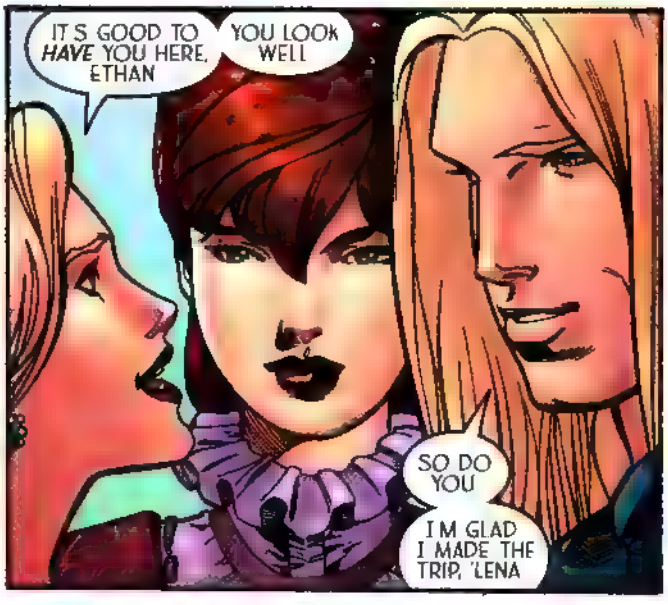

THIS *WASN'T* A GOOD IDEA, ETHAN
HOW COULD YOUR FAMILY POSSIBLY ACCEPT SOMEONE OF *MY* FAMILY, ESPECIALLY AFTER WHAT YOU'VE SUFFERED?
I THINK I'D RATHER GO INTO *BATTLE* THAN FACE WHAT WE RE ABOUT TO DO

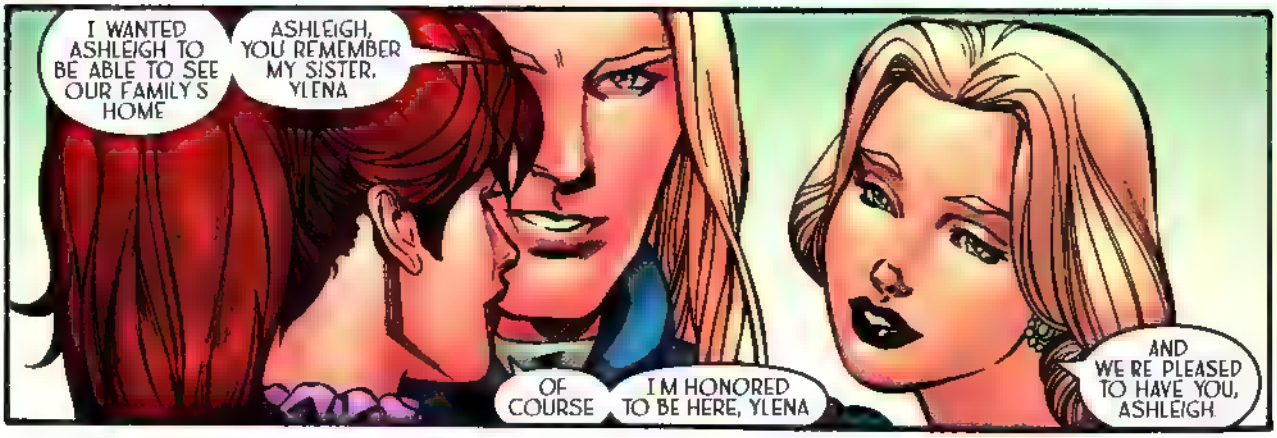

ASHLEIGH, LET'S REMEMBER THE FIRST TIME I VISITED *YOUR* FAMILY I WAS THROWN INTO THE DUNGEON IN CHAINS.
THIS SHOULD BE PRETTY *EASY* IN COMPARISON
IT'LL BE ALL RIGHT MY FAMILY *WILL* ACCEPT YOU MY FAMILY IS.

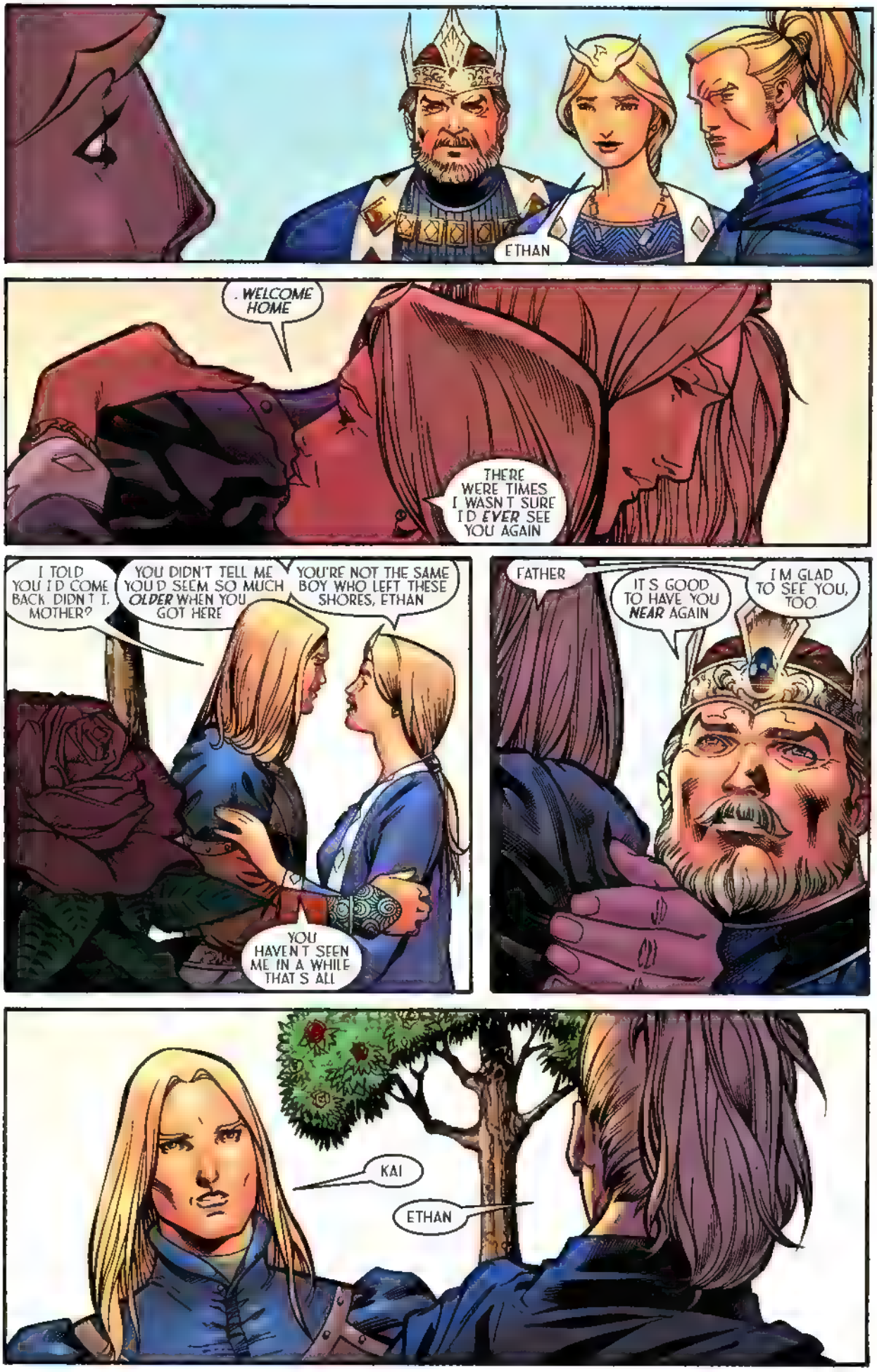
WELL
THEY'RE HERE

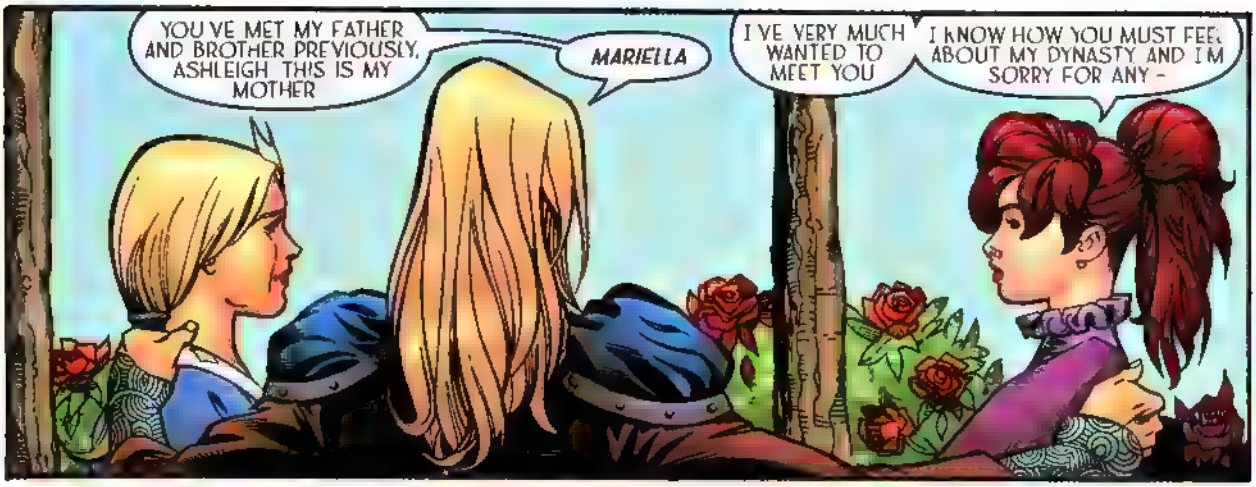
ETHAN!


IT'S ABOUT *TIME* MY LITTLE BROTHER FINALLY CAME HOME!
I'M NOT SURE THIS REALLY *IS* HOME TO ME ANYMORE, YLENA
BUT IT *IS* GOOD TO BE HERE

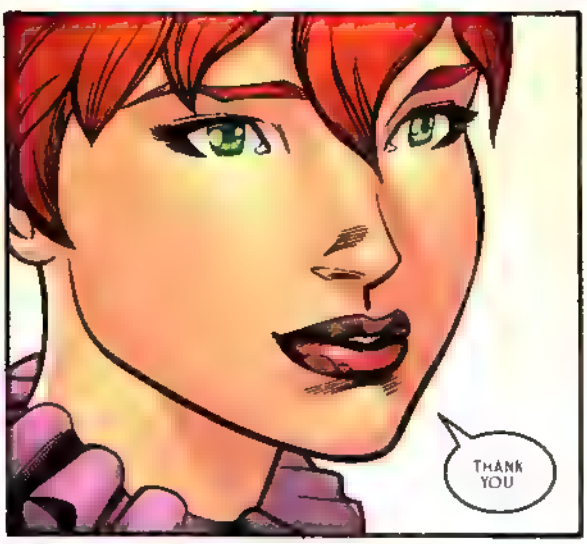

IT'S GOOD TO *HAVE* YOU HERE, ETHAN
YOU LOOK WELL
SO DO YOU
I'M GLAD I MADE THE TRIP, 'LENA

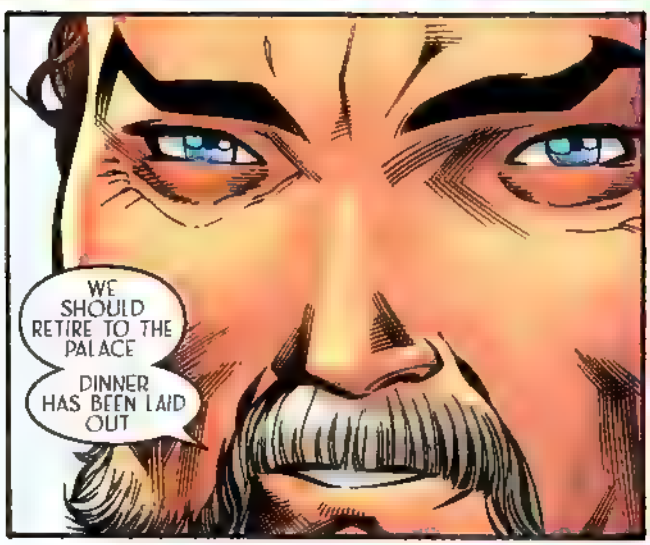

I WANTED ASHLEIGH TO BE ABLE TO SEE OUR FAMILY'S HOME
ASHLEIGH, YOU REMEMBER MY SISTER, YLENA
OF COURSE
I'M HONORED TO BE HERE, YLENA
AND WE'RE PLEASED TO HAVE YOU, ASHLEIGH

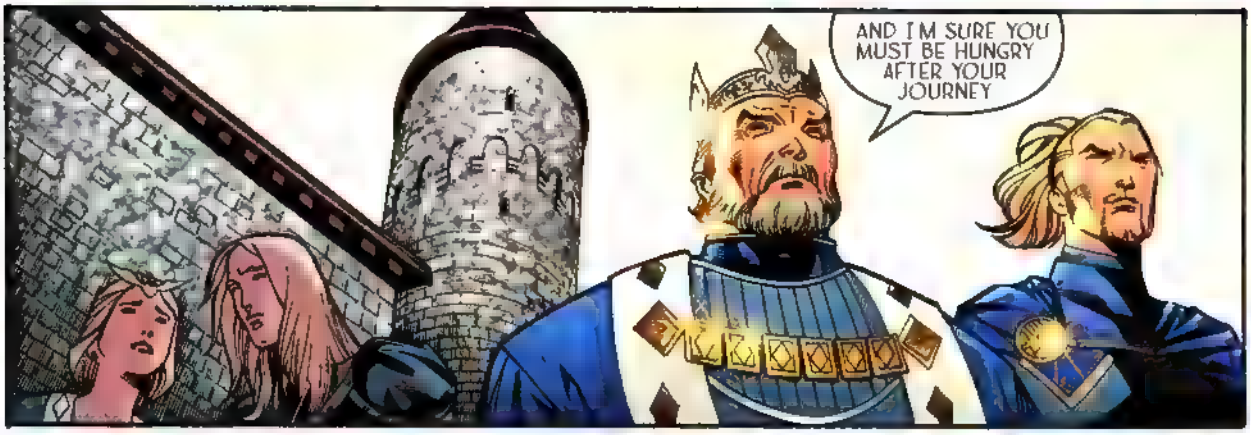

ETHAN
WELCOME HOME
THERE WERE TIMES I WASN'T SURE I'D EVER SEE YOU AGAIN
I TOLD YOU I'D COME BACK, DIDN'T I, MOTHER?
YOU DIDN'T TELL ME YOU'D SEEM SO MUCH OLDER WHEN YOU GOT HERE
YOU'RE NOT THE SAME BOY WHO LEFT THESE SHORES, ETHAN
YOU HAVEN'T SEEN ME IN A WHILE, THAT'S ALL
FATHER
IT'S GOOD TO HAVE YOU NEAR AGAIN
I'M GLAD TO SEE YOU, TOO
KAI
ETHAN

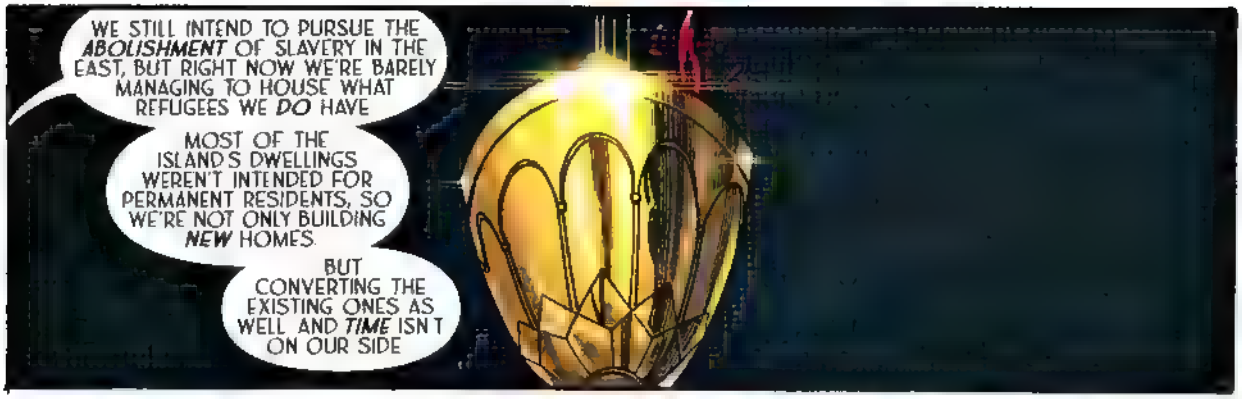

YOU'VE MET MY FATHER AND BROTHER PREVIOUSLY, ASHLEIGH. THIS IS MY MOTHER
MARIELLA
I'VE VERY MUCH WANTED TO MEET YOU
I KNOW HOW YOU MUST FEEL ABOUT MY DYNASTY AND I'M SORRY FOR ANY -

YOU HAVE NO APOLOGIES TO MAKE HERE, ASHLEIGH
I DON'T JUDGE YOU BY THE ACTIONS OF YOUR FAMILY, PARTICULARLY IF YOU AND ETHAN ARE FOND OF ONE ANOTHER

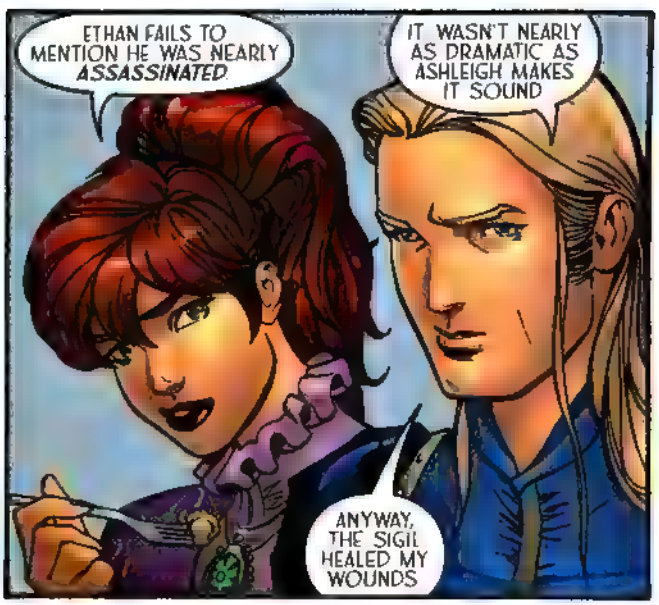

THANK YOU


WE SHOULD RETIRE TO THE PALACE
DINNER HAS BEEN LAID OUT


AND I'M SURE YOU MUST BE HUNGRY AFTER YOUR JOURNEY


WE STILL INTEND TO PURSUE THE ABOLISHMENT OF SLAVERY IN THE EAST, BUT RIGHT NOW WE'RE BARELY MANAGING TO HOUSE WHAT REFUGEES WE DO HAVE
MOST OF THE ISLAND'S DWELLINGS WEREN'T INTENDED FOR PERMANENT RESIDENTS, SO WE'RE NOT ONLY BUILDING NEW HOMES
BUT CONVERTING THE EXISTING ONES AS WELL AND TIME ISN'T ON OUR SIDE

...BECAUSE MORE REFUGEES TRICKLE IN EVERY DAY AND THE COLD WEATHER WILL BE CLOSING IN SOON
SOMETIMES WHAT WE'RE TRYING TO DO SEEMS IMPOSSIBLE, BUT ASHLEIGH KEEPS MY SPIRITS BUOYED

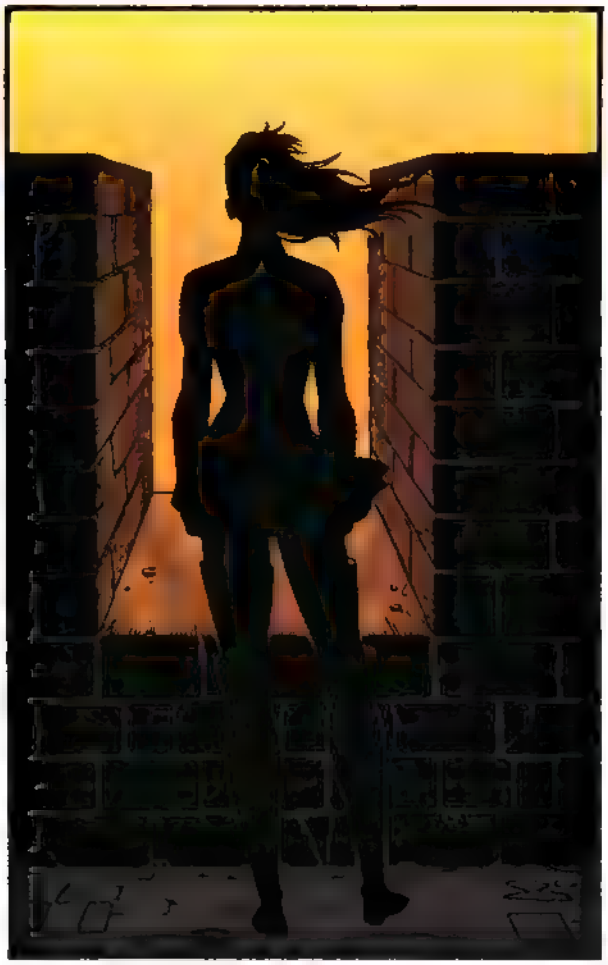

ETHAN FAILS TO MENTION HE WAS NEARLY ASSASSINATED
IT WASN'T NEARLY AS DRAMATIC AS ASHLEIGH MAKES IT SOUND
ANYWAY, THE SIGIL HEALED MY WOUNDS

AN ATTEMPT ON YOUR LIFE FAILED THIS TIME, ETHAN
WHAT ABOUT THE NEXT? OR THE ONE AFTER THAT?
YOU SHOULD BE PREPARED FOR SUCH THINGS IF YOU CONTINUE THIS FOOLISHNESS OF ATTEMPTING TO LEAD YOUR OWN KINGDOM

BUT
I THOUGHT YOU *SUPPORTED* WHAT I'M DOING ON THE SANCTUARY ISLE, FATHER
THAT'S WHAT YOU *TOLD* ME
YOU CONFUSE *TOLERATING* YOUR FOLLY WITH SUPPORTING IT, ETHAN
I'VE NEVER THOUGHT YOUR PLACE WAS ANYWHERE BUT *HERE*
I DON'T *UNDERSTAND* WHEN WE SPOKE ON THE SHORE, THE *ADVICE* YOU OFFERED ME
THIS ISN'T *LIKE* YOU, FATHER
WHAT IS IT YOU *EXPECTED*, ETHAN? FOR US TO *EMBRACE* YOU AFTER YOU TURNED YOUR BACK ON YOUR FAMILY?
I ALWAYS SAW YOUR DISLOYALTY FOR WHAT IT WAS.
I'M GLAD FATHER FINALLY SEES IT, TOO
WHAT *YOU* REFUSE TO SEE, KAI, IS THAT I *NEVER* BETRAYED THIS FAMILY
NO?
AND HOW IS IT YOU'VE *SHOWN* YOUR LOYALTY?
BY BRINGING THE SISTER OF ARTOR'S *MURDERER* INTO OUR HOUSE?
TO THE SAME TABLE AT WHICH ARTOR ATE?
I AM *NOT* MY BROTHER

ASHLEIGH HAS DONE NOTHING TO HARM THIS FAMILY OR THIS KINGDOM!
SHE'S SAVED MY LIFE MORE THAN ONCE!
SO THE TWO OF YOU COULD RUN OFF TOGETHER WHILE WE BURY OUR DEAD FROM THE WAR YOU STARTED!
I NEVER INTENDED THE WAR!
I DID EVERYTHING I COULD TO AVOID IT, AND I'M THE ONE WHO ENDED IT!
WHAT'S ENDED IS YOU BEING A PART OF THIS FAMILY! THE ONLY BROTHER I HAVE LIES IN A CRYPT BELOW THIS—
STOP IT...
STOP IT, BOTH OF YOU
I WILL NOT TOLERATE THIS BEHAVIOR IN MY HOUSE, PARTICULARLY FROM SONS I HAVE RAISED TO KNOW BETTER
THIS IS ETHAN'S HOMECOMING AND I WILL NOT HAVE IT MARRED BY PETTY BICKERING
THOUGH YOU REFUSE TO ACT LIKE IT, YOU ARE BOTH GROWN MEN
WHATEVER DISAGREEMENT YOU HAVE WILL BE RESOLVED AMICABLY
NOW, I EXPECT EVERYONE
MOST ESPECIALLY MY SONS
TO PUT THIS ASIDE AND DRINK EACH OTHER'S HEALTH

ETHAN?
I HAVE NO WISH TO QUARREL WITH YOU KAI
TO YOUR HEALTH, BROTHER
KAI?
KAI?



Hm?

ASHLEIGH SORRY
I DIDN'T MEAN TO STARTLE YOU
NO, YLENA, THAT'S FINE I WAS JUST TAKING IN THE EVENING UP HERE
I TRUTHFULLY DIDN'T KNOW WHERE ELSE TO GO ETHAN'S OFF BY HIMSELF, THINKING
HE'S TAKING ALL THIS VERY HARD, SO I THOUGHT THE TIME ALONE WOULD BE GOOD FOR HIM

I'M SURE IT WILL BE
I'M GLAD, BECAUSE IT GIVES THE TWO OF US A CHANCE TO TALK
ASHLEIGH FORGIVE ME FOR BEING DIRECT, BUT
YOU SEEM DIFFERENT TO ME SOMEHOW

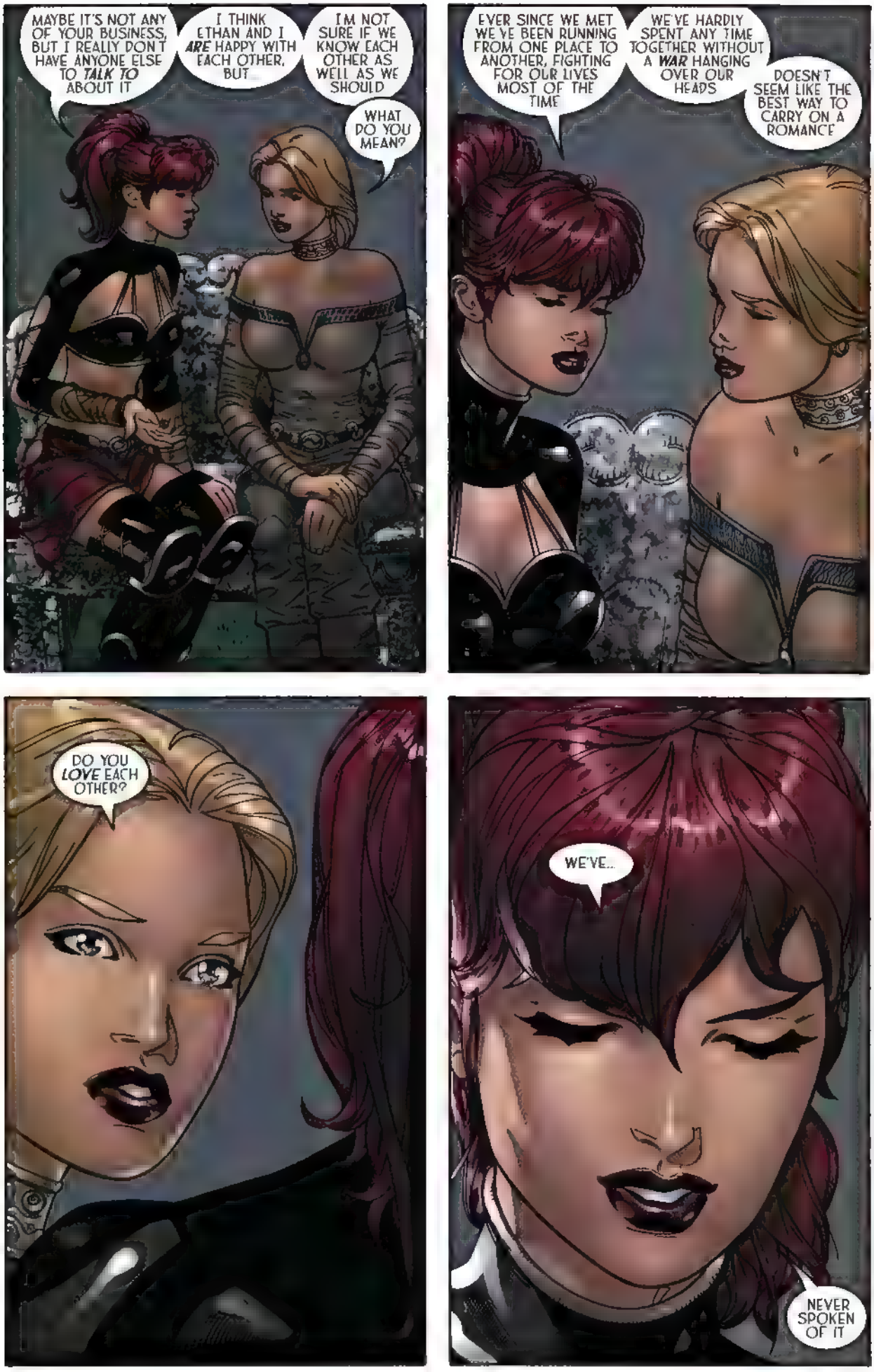
Hm?

KAI
I'M GLAD YOU CAME I DON'T WANT THINGS BETWEEN US TO *GO ON* LIKE THIS.
I DIDN'T EXPECT TO FIND YOU *HERE*
I WAS THINKING ABOUT ARTOR. THIS PLACE REMINDS ME OF HIM.
IF YOU WANT TO *HONOR* OUR BROTHER'S MEMORY YOU SHOULD VISIT HIS *TOMB*. I GO THERE OFTEN

YET YOU'VE NEVER BEEN BACK TO IT *ONCE*, HAVE YOU?
I PREFER TO REMEMBER HIM *ALIVE*, NOT SEALED AWAY IN A TOMB.
OR IS IT THAT YOUR *CONSCIENCE* PREVENTS YOU FROM SETTING FOOT THERE?
I WARN YOU, BROTHER
I'LL ONLY BE *PUSHED* SO FAR

DIFFERENT?
I DON'T KNOW. MAYBE I *AM*
I'VE BEEN FEELING ADRIFT EVER SINCE WE MADE THE TOURNAMENT ISLE INTO A SANCTUARY
WE ACCOMPLISHED A GOAL THAT I'D BEEN PURSUING FOR *SO LONG* WITH THE UNDERGROUND
GIVING THE LESSER RACES A PLACE THEY COULD LIVE IN FREEDOM
I'VE ALWAYS HAD THAT *DRIVING* ME, TO THE EXCLUSION OF ALL ELSE, TRUTHFULLY
MY ENTIRE LIFE HAD BEEN BUILT AROUND *FIGHTING* FOR THAT CAUSE NOW I'M NOT QUITE SURE HOW I'M SUPPOSED TO *LIVE* MY LIFE
AND BEING WITH ETHAN IS NEW TO ME AS WELL
I'VE NEVER LET *ANYONE* GET THIS CLOSE TO ME
I SUPPOSE YOU MIGHT TELL ME IT'S NONE OF MY BUSINESS
BUT ARE YOU *HAPPY* WITH ETHAN?

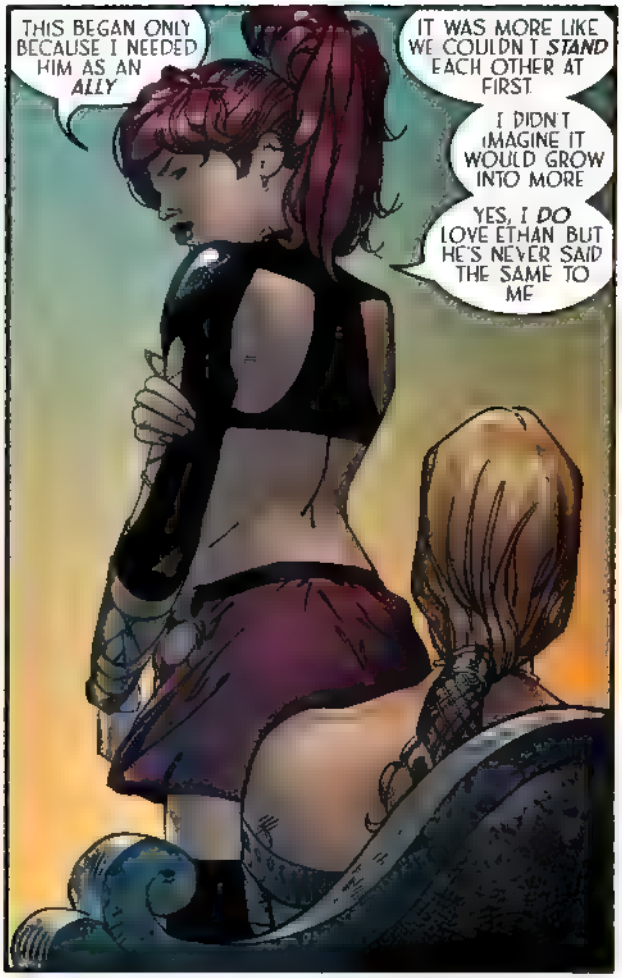
IS THIS FAR ENOUGH, ETHAN?
HNGH!
IF THIS IS WHAT YOU WANT
IT'S WHAT YOU DESERVE
UNFF!


MAYBE IT'S NOT ANY OF YOUR BUSINESS, BUT I REALLY DON'T HAVE ANYONE ELSE TO *TALK TO* ABOUT IT
I THINK ETHAN AND I *ARE* HAPPY WITH EACH OTHER, BUT...
I'M NOT SURE IF WE KNOW EACH OTHER AS WELL AS WE SHOULD
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
EVER SINCE WE MET WE'VE BEEN RUNNING FROM ONE PLACE TO ANOTHER, FIGHTING FOR OUR LIVES MOST OF THE TIME
WE'VE HARDLY SPENT ANY TIME TOGETHER WITHOUT A *WAR* HANGING OVER OUR HEADS
DOESN'T SEEM LIKE THE BEST WAY TO CARRY ON A ROMANCE
DO YOU *LOVE* EACH OTHER?
WE'VE...
NEVER SPOKEN OF IT

TRAITOR!

GNFF!

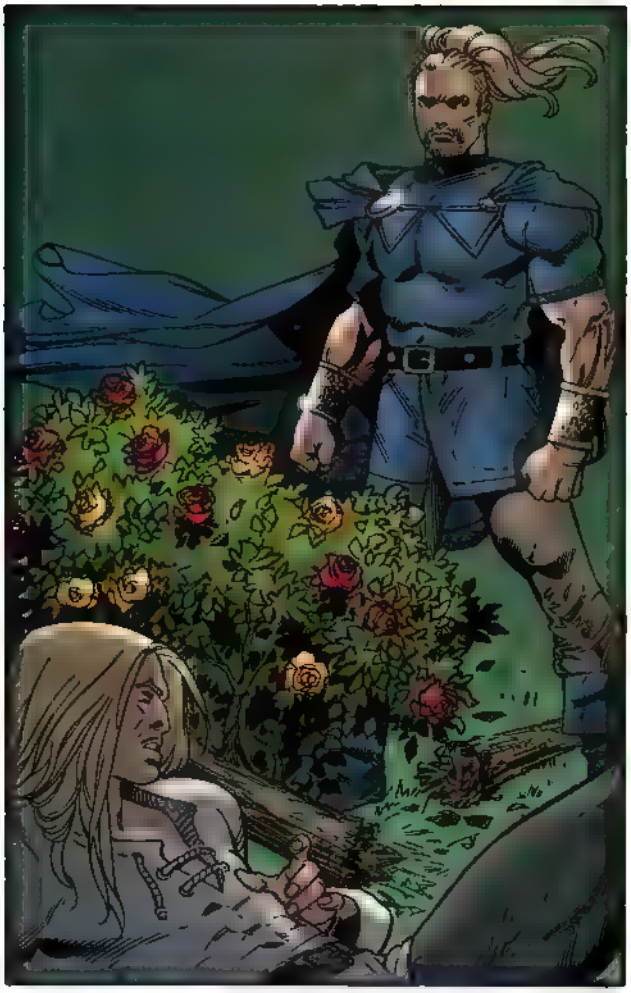
UNGH!
KRATCH


THIS BEGAN ONLY BECAUSE I NEEDED HIM AS AN *ALLY*
IT WAS MORE LIKE WE COULDN'T *STAND* EACH OTHER AT FIRST
I DIDN'T IMAGINE IT WOULD GROW INTO MORE
YES, I *DO* LOVE ETHAN BUT HE'S NEVER SAID THE SAME TO ME

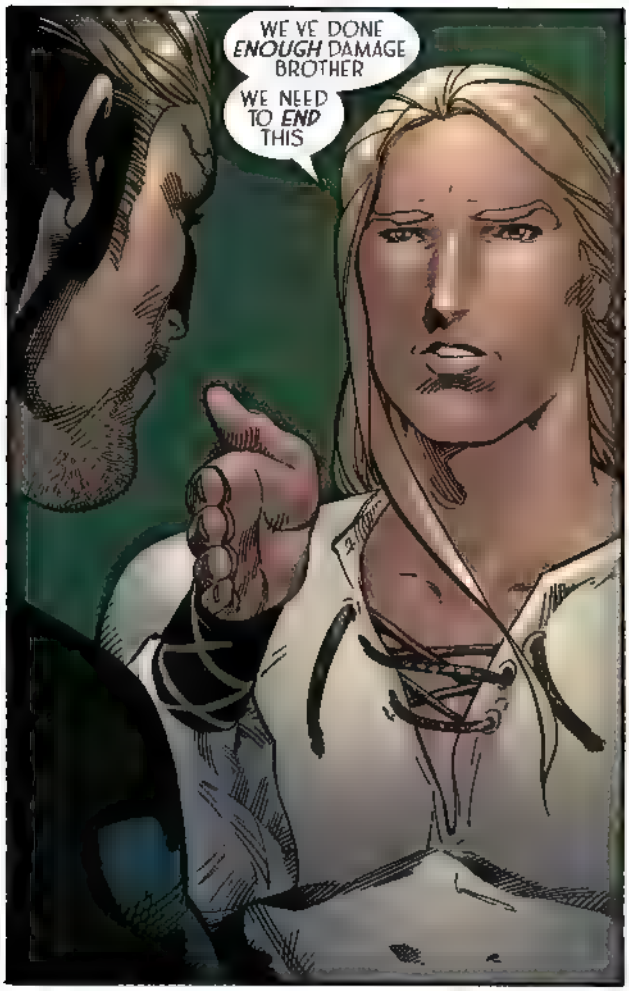
HE MIGHT NOT KNOW *HOW* TO TELL YOU, ASHLEIGH. HE MIGHT NOT EVEN KNOW HE'S *SUPPOSED* TO.
IF THERE'S ONE THING I *DO* KNOW ABOUT MEN, IT'S THAT THEY'RE ALL LITTLE BOYS
GIVE HIM SOME TIME TO GET IT RIGHT

YOU'RE *GOOD* FOR ETHAN, AND I HOPE HE'S GOOD FOR YOU
REAL LOVE IS A RARE ENOUGH THING. I THINK YOU'LL FIND A WAY TO BE TOGETHER

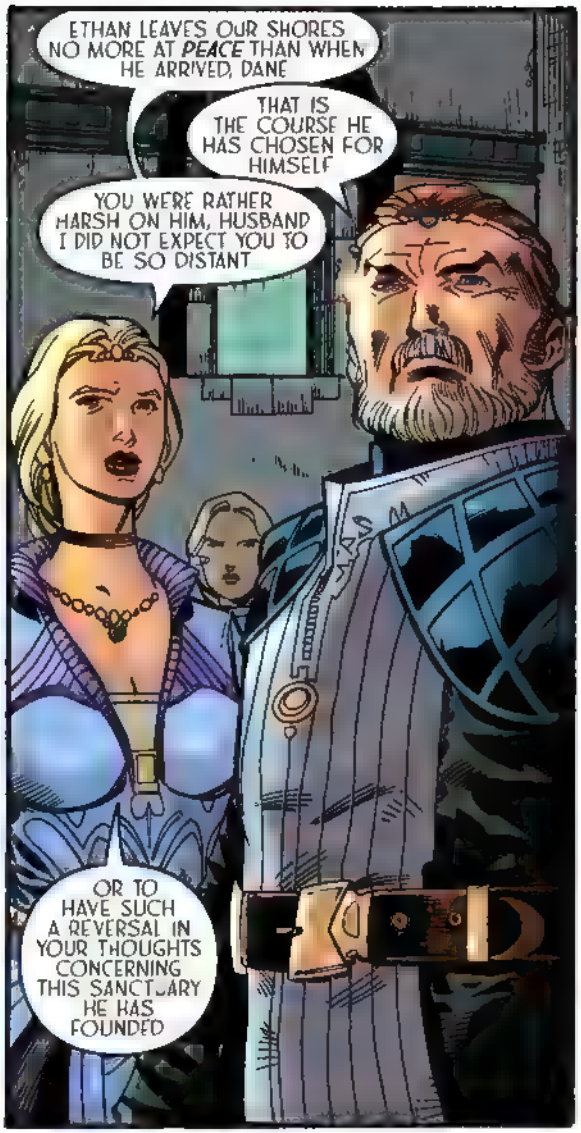
YOU'LL ALWAYS BE WELCOME IN THIS PLACE, ASHLEIGH.
NEITHER OF US HAVE A SISTER, BUT I'LL BE HERE ANYTIME YOU NEED ONE
THANK YOU

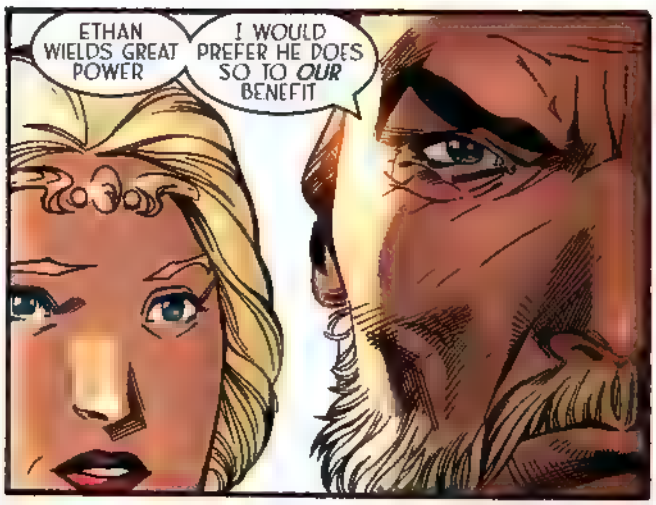


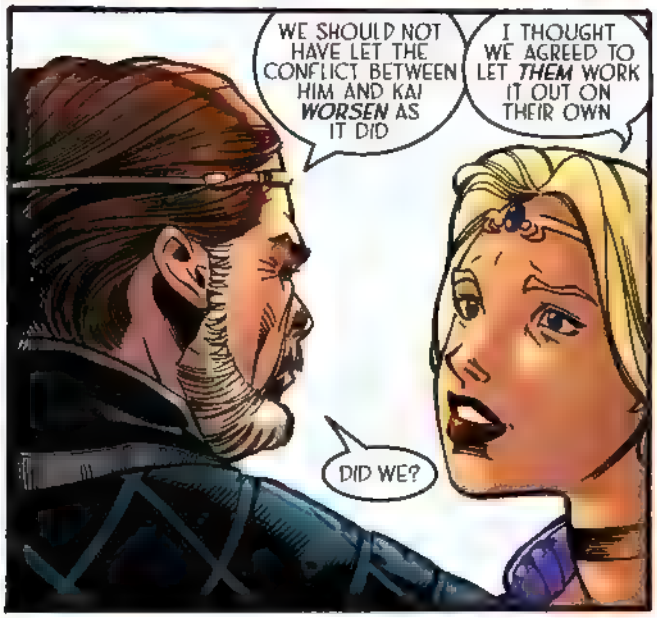
THIS HAS GONE FAR ENOUGH, KAI *TOO FAR*
I NEVER MEANT TO HARM OUR KINGDOM, OR OUR FAMILY, OR *YOU* I DID WHAT I BELIEVED BEST WHAT I BELIEVED WAS *NECESSARY*
BUT I SWEAR TO YOU I WILL ALWAYS BE HERE WHEN I'M NEEDED I WILL *ALWAYS* BE TRUE TO THE HERON BLOOD IN MY VEINS


WE'VE DONE *ENOUGH* DAMAGE BROTHER
WE NEED TO *END* THIS

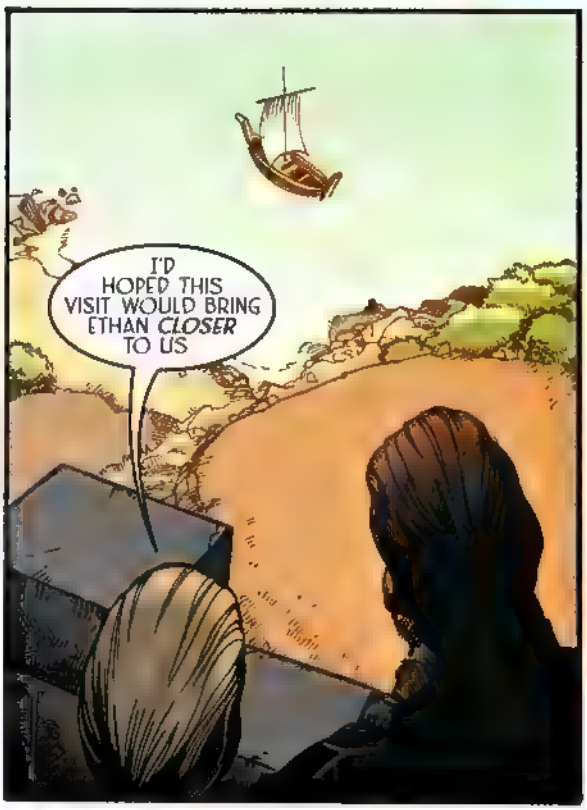
IT *IS* ENDED
YOU ARE NO LONGER WELCOME HERE
YOU ARE NO LONGER MY *BROTHER*


ETHAN LEAVES OUR SHORES NO MORE AT *PEACE* THAN WHEN HE ARRIVED, DANE
THAT IS THE COURSE HE HAS CHOSEN FOR HIMSELF
YOU WERE RATHER HARSH ON HIM, HUSBAND I DID NOT EXPECT YOU TO BE SO DISTANT
OR TO HAVE SUCH A REVERSAL IN YOUR THOUGHTS CONCERNING THIS SANCTUARY HE HAS FOUNDED


ETHAN WIELDS GREAT POWER
I WOULD PREFER HE DOES SO TO *OUR* BENEFIT

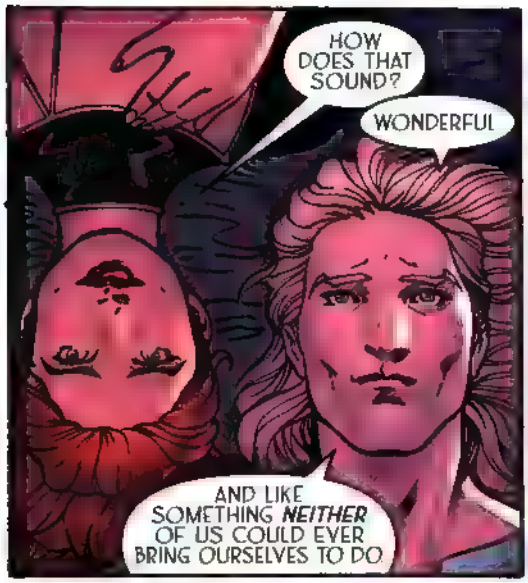

WE SHOULD NOT HAVE LET THE CONFLICT BETWEEN HIM AND KAI *WORSEN* AS IT DID
I THOUGHT WE AGREED TO LET *THEM* WORK IT OUT ON THEIR OWN
DID WE?

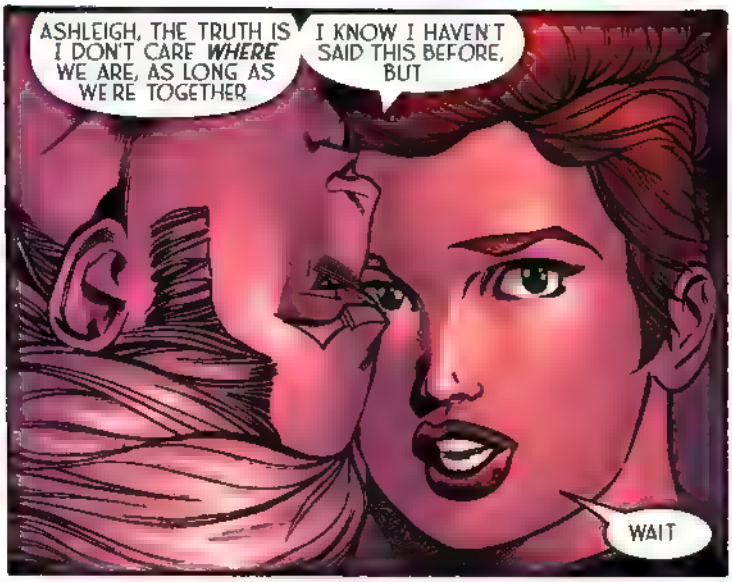
YES.
YES, OF COURSE WE DID


I'D HOPED THIS VISIT WOULD BRING ETHAN *CLOSER* TO US

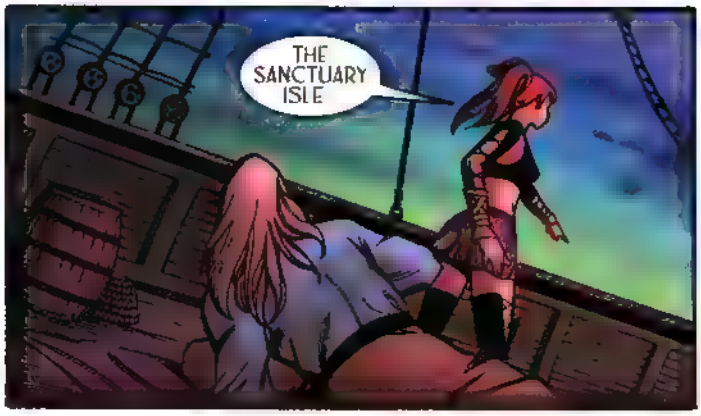
BUT I FEAR WE'VE DONE NOTHING BUT DRIVEN HIM FURTHER AWAY
THIS WASN'T THE TRIP I WANTED.

AND NOW IT'S ALMOST OVER
I THOUGHT I COULD MEND THINGS BY GOING HOME. I'VE JUST MADE THEM WORSE
WE COULD ALWAYS *RUN AWAY* TOGETHER
JUST KEEP SAILING, LEAVE BEHIND ALL RESPONSIBILITIES WAITING FOR US AND ONLY HAVE *EACH OTHER* TO TAKE CARE OF


HOW DOES THAT SOUND?
WONDERFUL
AND LIKE SOMETHING *NEITHER* OF US COULD EVER BRING OURSELVES TO DO


ASHLEIGH, THE TRUTH IS I DON'T CARE *WHERE* WE ARE, AS LONG AS WE'RE TOGETHER
I KNOW I HAVEN'T SAID THIS BEFORE, BUT
WAIT

ASH?
WHAT IS IT?
OVER THERE


THE SANCTUARY ISLE

WE'RE UNDER ATTACK

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Thus Far in Scion

What started with a mysterious sigil led to war. Prince Ethan of the West-ruling Heron Dynasty was graced with a mark granting him power, leading to the accidental scarring of Prince Bron of the East-ruling Raven Dynasty during ritual combat.

War between the kingdoms followed, but as the conflict raged, Ethan pledged his loyalty to the Underground movement dedicated to freeing the genetically engineered Lesser Races. His companion in this was Ashleigh, Raven princess and sister to Bron. Eventually the two gave in to their mutual attraction and became lovers.

Ethan and a small band of followers, including his sidekick Skink, the bounty hunter Exeter, and Nadia, a traveler from the far kingdom of Tigris, took control of an island and made it a Sanctuary for the Lesser Races. Ethan then used his power to end the war and apparently slay Bron.

Needing a respite, Ethan and Ashleigh paid a visit to the Heron royal family. Ashleigh and Ethan's sister Ylena grew closer, but Ethan came to blows with his brother, Kai. Upon their return to the Sanctuary Isle, Ethan and Ashleigh found their new home under attack.

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BACK
DRIVE THEM BACK INTO THE SEA!

IF THESE SEA ROVING SCUM WANT SANCTUARY ISLE
THEY'LL MARCH OVER A PILE OF THEIR OWN DEAD TO TAKE IT!

FORWARD!
PUSH THE ADVANCE!

WE'VE TAKEN PROUD SHIPS FROM HARDENED SAILORS
WE WON'T BE STOPPED BY *LESSER* OPPONENTS WHO AREN'T HALF ABLE TO DEFEND THEMSELVES!
HRRK!

CLEAN OUT THIS RABBLE AND WE'LL HAVE A NEW *HOME*, LADS! WITH THIS ISLAND AS A SAFE HAVEN
NOTHING ON THE SEAS WILL DARE DEFY THE KAMRANI BROTHERHOOD!

CHUKT
YAGH!
MIND YOUR BACK, EXETER
I'M IN YOUR DEBT NAPIA
THEY'RE COMING FROM EVERYWHERE, AND WE HAVEN'T NEARLY ENOUGH EXPERIENCED FIGHTERS
WE'RE IN A DESPERATE POSITION WITHOUT ETHAN HERE
WHAT DO WE DO?
WHAT CAN WE DO?
CALL THE RETREAT AND FALL BACK TO THE BARRICADES
WE'LL HOLD THEM AS LONG AS WE CAN

THEY RUN FROM US
YOU WOULD TOO IF YOU HAD SO LITTLE IDEA OF HOW TO FIGHT
ANIMALS

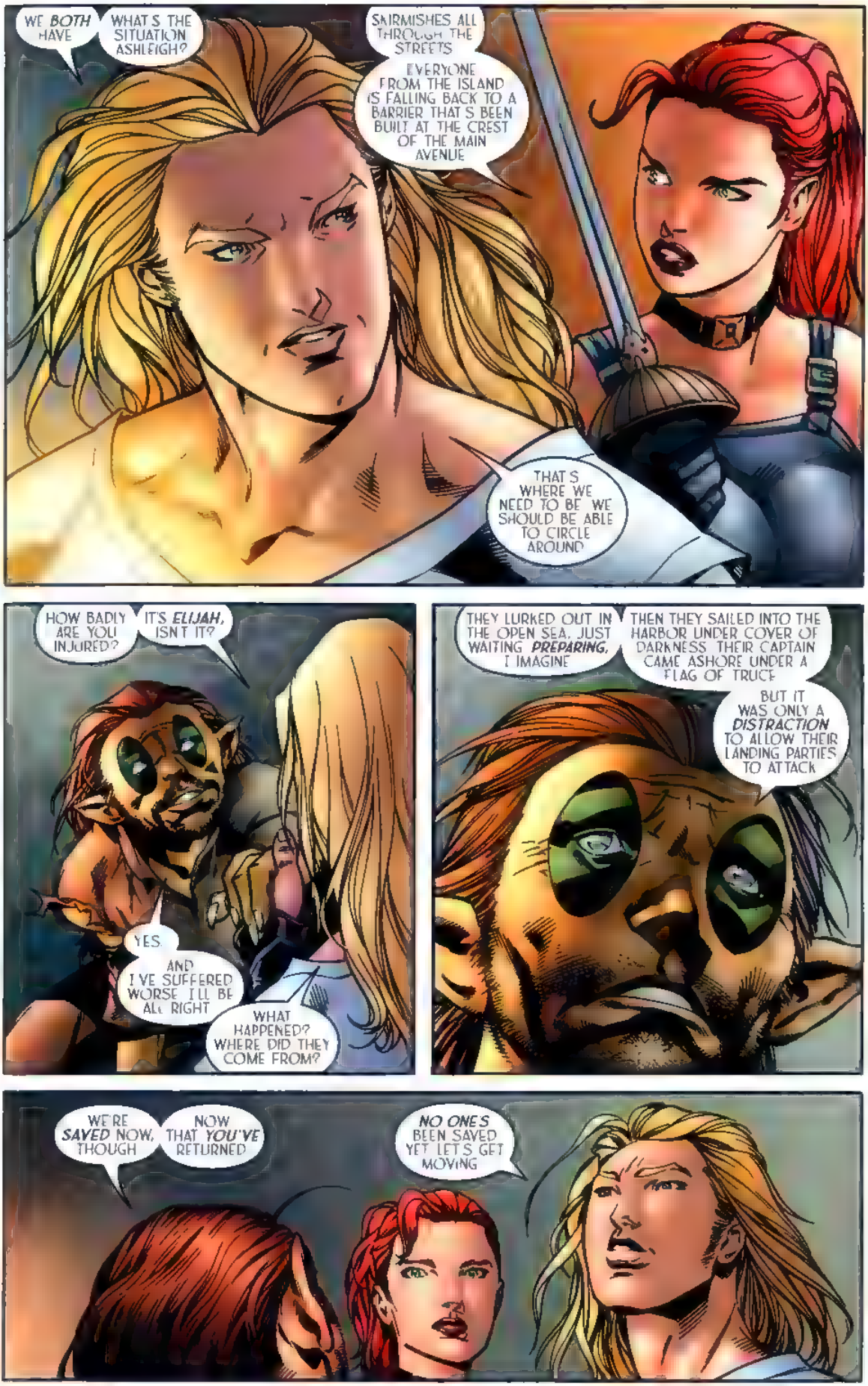
AT LEAST COME AND MEET YOUR DEATHS LIKE MEN!

I SACRIFICED TOO MUCH TO HAVE MY HOME ..
AND MY FREEDOM
TAKEN AWAY BY YOU!
HMF?

WE'LL FIGHT TO THE LAST OF US TO KEEP OUR SANCTUARY!

FIGHT ALL YOU WANT
IT WON'T MAKE ANY DIFFERENCE
HGH!
AAHN!
YOU'RE NO MATCH FOR THE KAMRANI BROTHERHOOD! YOU'LL ALL BE—

ETHAN
YOU'VE RETURNED


WE BOTH HAVE
WHAT'S THE SITUATION ASHLEIGH?
SKIRMISHES ALL THROUGH THE STREETS
EVERYONE FROM THE ISLAND IS FALLING BACK TO A BARRIER THAT'S BEEN BUILT AT THE CREST OF THE MAIN AVENUE
THAT'S WHERE WE NEED TO BE WE SHOULD BE ABLE TO CIRCLE AROUND
HOW BADLY ARE YOU INJURED?
IT'S ELIJAH, ISN'T IT?
YES
AND I'VE SUFFERED WORSE I'LL BE ALL RIGHT
WHAT HAPPENED? WHERE DID THEY COME FROM?
THEY LURKED OUT IN THE OPEN SEA, JUST WAITING PREPARING, I IMAGINE
THEN THEY SAILED INTO THE HARBOR UNDER COVER OF DARKNESS THEIR CAPTAIN CAME ASHORE UNDER A FLAG OF TRUCE
BUT IT WAS ONLY A DISTRACTION TO ALLOW THEIR LANDING PARTIES TO ATTACK
WE'RE SAVED NOW, THOUGH
NOW THAT YOU'VE RETURNED
NO ONE'S BEEN SAVED YET LET'S GET MOVING

WE NEED TO FIND EXETER
COME CLOSER, YOU SCAVENGERS!
GHN!
NF!
YOU WANT THIS ISLAND
COME TAKE IT FROM ME!
SEA LABIN, SCUM
EXETER LOOK

ETHAN?
ASHLEIGH?
WHEN DID YOU RETURN?
NOT SOON ENOUGH APPARENTLY

NO, I BELIEVE YOU'RE JUST IN TIME
YOUR TRIP HOME?
HORRIBLE I'M GLAD TO BE BACK
EVEN UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES

THE KAMRANI BROTHERHOOD THEY CALL THEMSELVES FREEBOOTERS.
BUT THERE'S MORE TRUTH IN CALLING THEM THIEVES AND MURDERERS
WE TRIED TO HOLD THEM WHILE THE OTHERS PUT THE BARRICADE IN PLACE
BUT THERE AREN'T ENOUGH WARRIORS AMONG US, ETHAN

AND THE BROTHERHOOD'S READYING ITS ASSAULT

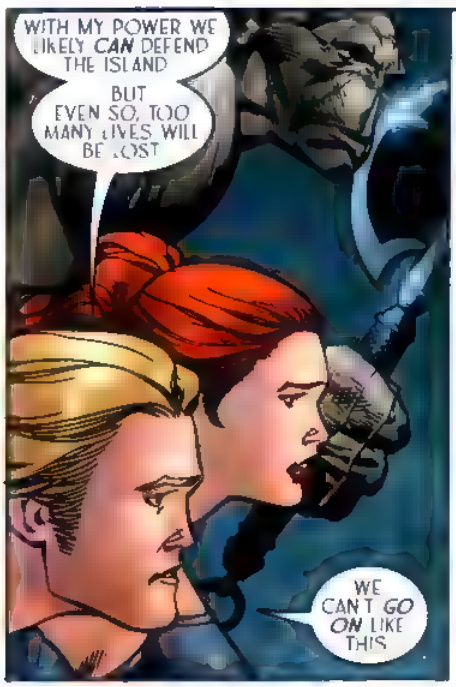
FORWARD!
THE PRIZE IS OURS FOR THE TAKING

AND WE'LL CHRISTEN IT IN BLOOD!

FALL BACK
GHHH

FALL BACK AND REGROUP!
THEY STOPPED US ONCE, IT WON'T HAPPEN AGAIN

WE'VE HELD THEM
FOR NOW
BUT EVENTUALLY THEY'LL BREAK THE BARRICADE
EVENTUALLY THEY'LL OVERWHELM US


WITH MY POWER WE LIKELY CAN DEFEND THE ISLAND
BUT EVEN SO, TOO MANY LIVES WILL BE LOST
WE CAN'T GO ON LIKE THIS

ETHAN?
ETHAN, WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

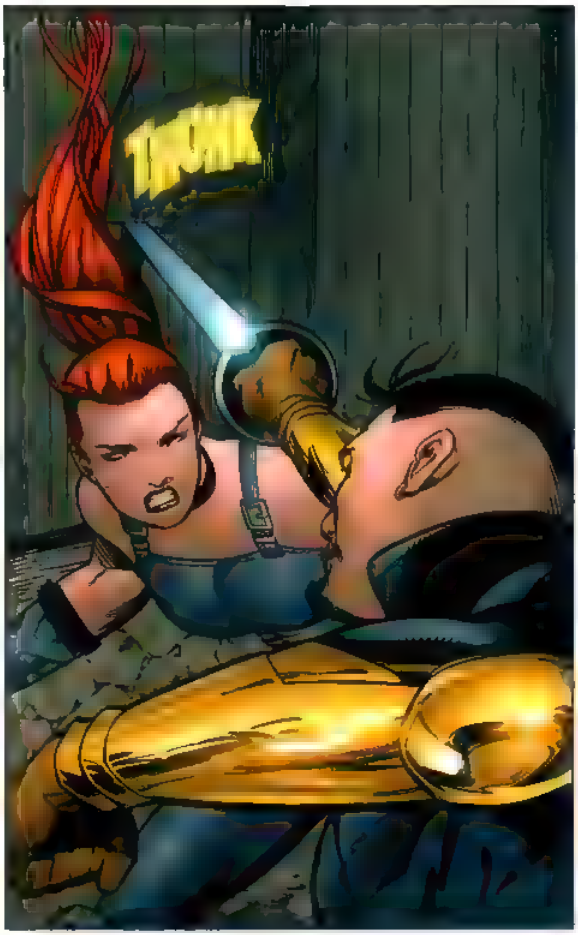
I AM ETHAN, FORMERLY OF THE HERON DYNASTY
THIS ISLAND IS UNDER MY PROTECTION
WHO LEADS YOU?
I DO
I AM CAPTAIN VINDAGE. THESE ARE MY MEN
WHY DO YOU ADDRESS ME? DO YOU WISH TERMS OF SURRENDER?
WHY HAVE YOU COME HERE?
OUR ISLAND HAS NOTHING TO OFFER. NOTHING TO PLUNDER
BUT THERE IS THE ISLAND ITSELF
NOW THAT IT IS NO LONGER PROTECTED BY THE HERONS AND RAVENS IT WILL MAKE A FINE HOME FOR MY FREEBOOTERS
THERE WILL NOT BE AN ISLAND IF THIS CONFLICT CONTINUES
EVERYTHING WILL BE LAID WASTE, NO MATTER WHO EMERGES VICTORIOUS
THEN IT WOULD BE WISE OF YOU TO SIMPLY LEAVE, NO?
THIS IS MY OFFER
SINGLE COMBAT BETWEEN THE TWO OF US DECIDES THE ISLAND'S FATE AND SPARES IT FOR THE VICTOR
THE LOSER'S FOLLOWERS DEPART

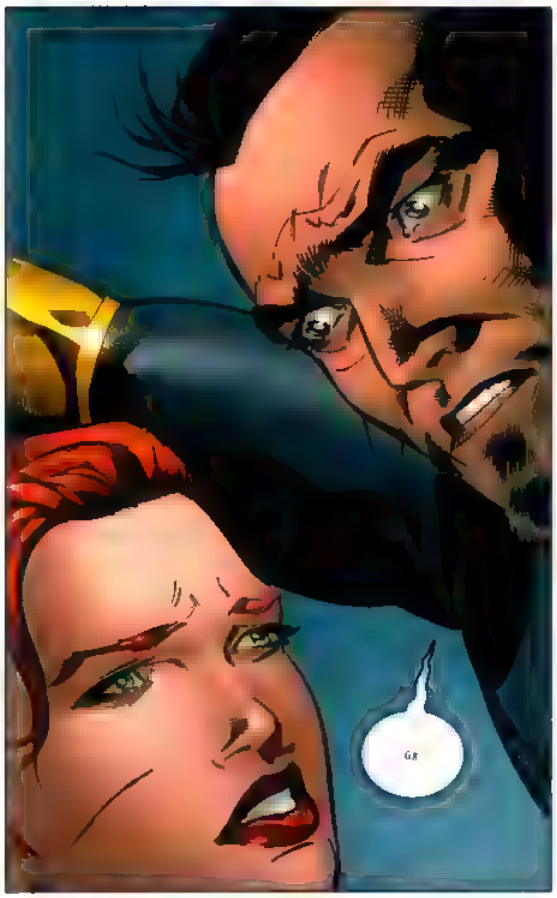
I'LL FIGHT *HER*
NO
THE OFFER IS FOR *ME* ONLY NOT--
I ACCEPT
YOU CHALLENGE ME AND YET YOU WIELD THAT WONDROUS BLADE SEEMS NOT THE *FAIREST* CONTEST
I'D WAGER YOU COULD SLAY ME WHERE I *STAND* IF YOU CHOSE
I'LL WIELD WHATEVER BLADE YOU CHOOSE, *WITHOUT* USE OF MY ABILITIES
DO YOU ACCEPT?
I DO ON *ONE* CONDITION
ASHLEIGH YOU *CAN'T* I M--
YOU'RE *WHAT*?
A BETTER WARRIOR, THAN I AM? I'VE PROBABLY BEEN IN MORE BATTLES THAN *YOU* HAVE, ETHAN
WE *TOOK* THE SANCTUARY ISLE TOGETHER *DEFENDING* IT IS MY RESPONSIBILITY TOO
AND IT'S NOT FOR *YOU* TO DECIDE WHAT I CAN AND CAN'T DO

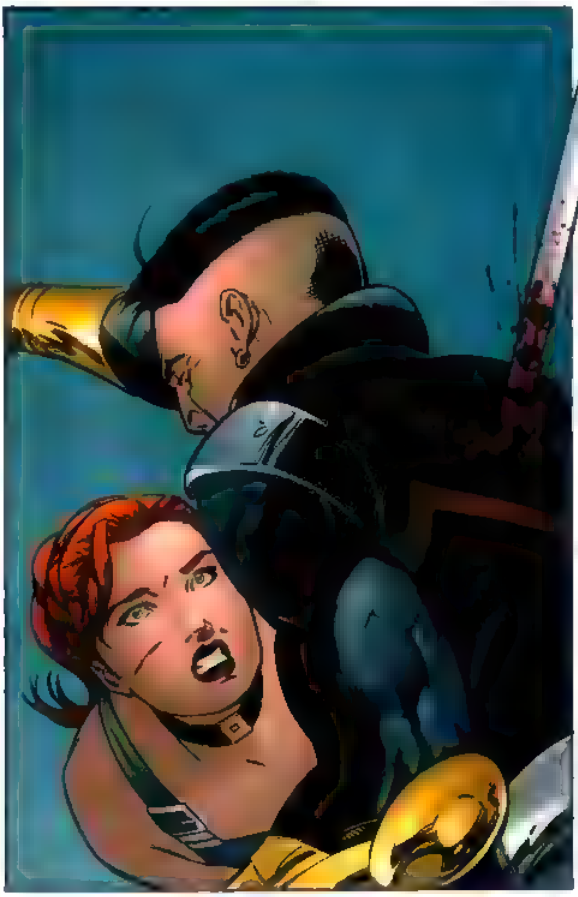
I TRULY WISH I DIDN'T HAVE TO DO THIS
FIGHT A WOMAN?
KILL A WOMAN
IT SEEMS SUCH AN UTTER WASTE TO SLAY SOMEONE OF YOUR OBVIOUS CHARMS
I'D PREFER YOU WERE PART OF THE SPOILS
SHING
YOU ARE A SPIRITED ONE
I'M DOUBLY SORRY
AAAH!

ASHLEIGH
THIS MUST BE HER BATTLE ETHAN
HERS ALONE
SURRENDER TO ME AND I'LL SPARE YOU
YOU WOULD LIVE IN LUXURY AT MY SIDE
I WOULD SOONER DIE IN THE DIRT AT YOUR FEET!
WHF!
HNN!

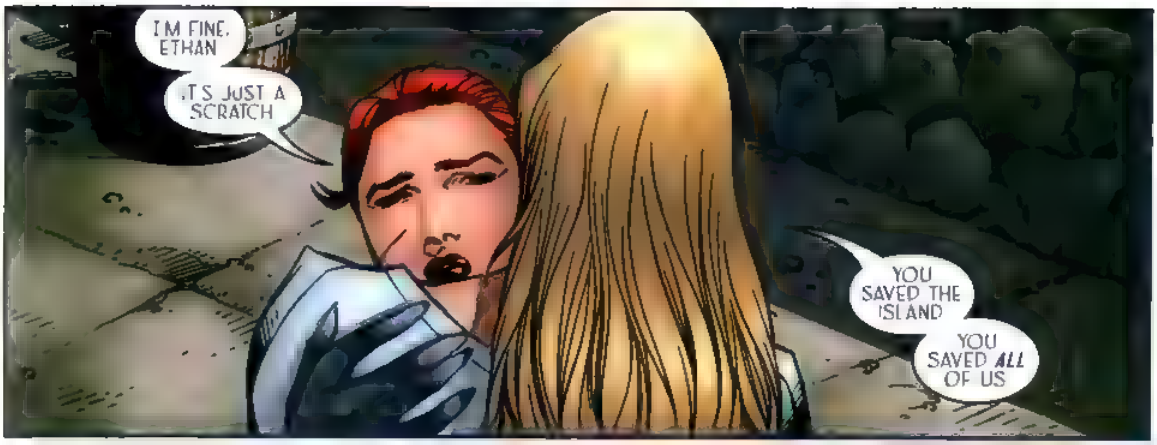
NNNNN
SUCH A SHAME
I DID GIVE YOU A CHOICE

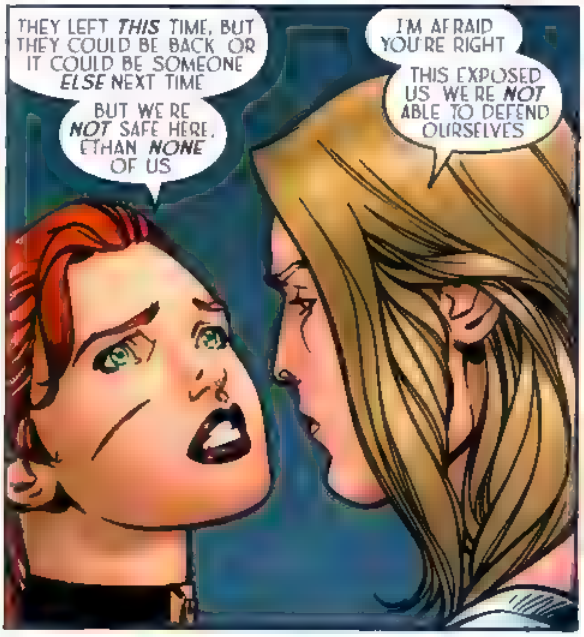

THUNK


GK



YOUR CAPTAIN IS *DEAD*
HONOR HIM BY *KEEPING* HIS BARGAIN
TAKE HIS BODY RETURN TO YOUR SHIPS
AND *NEVER* SET FOOT ON THESE SHORES AGAIN
ASH!
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?


I'M FINE, ETHAN
IT'S JUST A SCRATCH
YOU SAVED THE ISLAND
YOU SAVED *ALL* OF US


THEY LEFT *THIS* TIME, BUT THEY COULD BE BACK OR IT COULD BE SOMEONE *ELSE* NEXT TIME
BUT WE'RE *NOT* SAFE HERE, ETHAN *NONE* OF US
I'M AFRAID YOU'RE RIGHT
THIS EXPOSED US. WE'RE *NOT* ABLE TO DEFEND OURSELVES

THE ISLAND'S TOO DEPENDANT UPON MY POWER
WHAT IF I'M NOT HERE? OR I'M *KILLED*?
WE CAN'T CONTINUE LIKE THIS

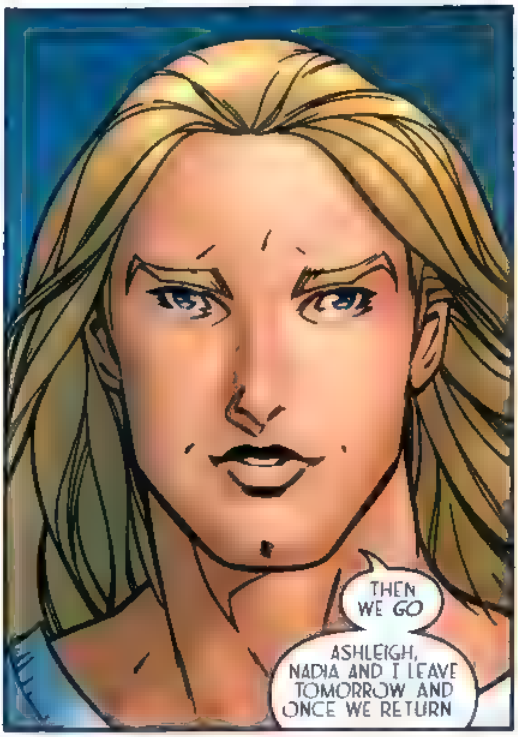
PERHAPS I CAN PROVIDE A SOLUTION
THE SCIENTIFIC ADVANCES MADE BY TIGRIS COULD SERVE AS AN *EQUALIZER*

IF WE UNDERTOOK A JOURNEY TO MY HOMELAND, YOU COULD STRIKE A BARGAIN FOR TECHNOLOGY THAT WOULD AID THE ISLAND IN DEFENDING ITSELF
I'M SURE MY PEOPLE WOULD BE *AGREEABLE* TO SUCH AN ARRANGEMENT

ASHLEIGH? WHAT DO YOU THINK?
WHAT CHOICE DO WE HAVE?

EXETER, I'M LOATH TO LEAVE THE ISLAND AGAIN SO SOON. BUT IT APPEARS A GREATER GOOD WILL BE SERVED
IT'S NOT A ROLE IN WHICH I AM COMFORTABLE ETHAN
BUT I WILL DO AS YOU ASK
CAN I ASK YOU TO CONTINUE SHOULDERING THE BURDEN OF LEADERSHIP?

YOU'RE PROBABLY THE *WISEST* PERSON I KNOW SKINK
I THINK IT WOULD BE BEST IF YOU REMAINED HERE, RATHER THAN ACCOMPANYING US BE HERE FOR EXETER
OF COURSE
YOU DON'T NEED ME LOOKING OVER YOUR SHOULDER ANYMORE, ETHAN


THEN WE GO
ASHLEIGH, NADIA AND I LEAVE TOMORROW AND ONCE WE RETURN

NOTHING WILL EVER THREATEN OUR SANCTUARY AGAIN

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Jim Fern
Guest PENCILER

Jennifer Cross
Guest INKER

Justin Thyme
Guest COLORIST

Troy Peteri
LETTERER

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COVER BY
Jim Fern,
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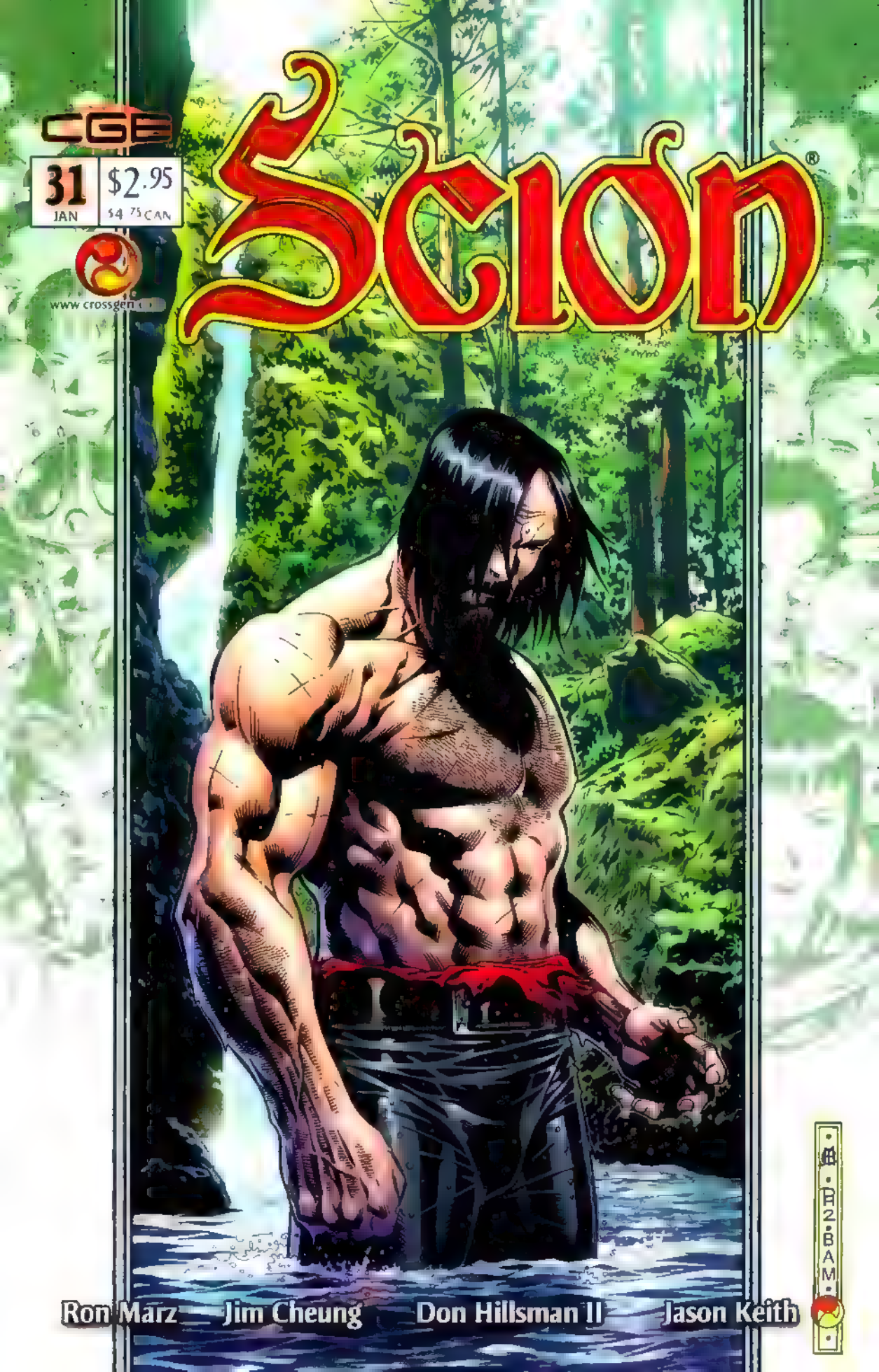
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Upon returning from a visit to his family, Ethan and Ashleigh found their new home under siege from freebooters. The attack was successfully turned away, but Ethan realized the island would continue to be vulnerable. The decision was made to set off for Tigris, and strike a pact for that land's advanced technology.

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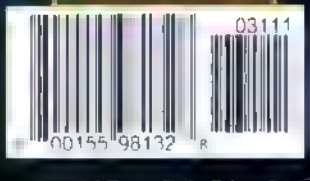
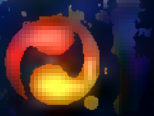




YOU THERE
STOP WHERE YOU ARE
WHO ARE YOU, RAGGEDY MAN?
SIMPLY A TRAVELER RETURNING HOME AFTER A LONG TIME AWAY

WEARING *THESE* RAGS?
THIS IS NOT SOME FILTHY BORDERLANDS HOVEL
YOU WOULD PRESENT YOURSELF TO THE CAPITAL OF OUR ENTIRE *KINGDOM* IN SUCH A SORRY STATE?
MY BUSINESS ISN'T WITH YOU!
IT'S *NOW*
SHOW YOURSELF PAUPER UNLESS YOU WANT THIS TO BE YOUR DYING GROUND
WHO *ARE* YOU?
-HHH-

I AM YOUR KING

SIRE!
SIRE, I'VE SEARCHED ALMOST THE ENTIRETY OF THE *PALACE* FOR YOU!
APPARENTLY YOU'VE *FOUND* ME. *WHAT* NEWS CHAMBERLAIN?
YOUR *BROTHER*, MY LORD
YOUR BROTHER IS *ALIVE* AND HE IS *HERE*
BUT THAT'S *IMPOSSIBLE*
BRON IS *DEAD*. HE DIED ON THE TOURNAMENT ISLE

HE JUST APPEARED AT THE CITY GATES
IT MUST BE AN *IMPOSTER*
A HERON RUSE PERHAPS
MY LORD *KORT*
I AGREE IT DOES NOT SEEM POSSIBLE *ESPECIALLY* AFTER ALL THIS TIME
BUT IT IS INDEED BRON AND HE IS ON HIS WAY TO THE PALACE IT *IS* YOUR BROTHER
THE *RIGHTFUL* KING
HE WILL COME HERE AND RECLAIM THE THRONE AND ONCE AGAIN I WILL BE RELEGATED TO THE SHADOWS
THE YOUNGER BROTHER WITHOUT POWER WITHOUT *PURPOSE*
JUST AS IT'S ALWAYS BEEN
IT REALLY *IS* HIM
BUT MY LORD IT IS *TRULY* BRON I TOLD YOU HE'S -
THE *PEOPLE* DO NOT KNOW THAT

THE PEOPLE ONLY NEED KNOW THAT AN IMPOSTER MANAGED TO GAIN ENTRANCE TO THE PALACE
A MADMAN DISGUISED AS THE FORMER KING
AND THAT HE MEANT TO DO THEIR MONARCH HARM
WHAT ELSE COULD I DO
BUT DEFEND MYSELF
SURE YOU CAN'T BE CONTEMPLATING THIS

YOU KNOW WHAT KIND OF POWER YOUR BROTHER POSSESSES
YOU KNOW WHAT HE IS CAPABLE OF
ARE TRUE
BUT HE DOES NOT KNOW WHAT I AM CAPABLE OF
MY LORD DO YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT YOU TEMPT?
BRON WILL SURELY -
WHAT SHOULD I DO?
STEP ASIDE AND SURRENDER THE THRONE AS THOUGH IT WERE NOTHING MORE THAN A
THAN A BAUBLE?
I'VE PROVEN MYSELF THE EQUAL OF THIS DUTY
I'M A MORE CAPABLE MONARCH THAN MY BROTHER COULD EVER HOPE TO BE
I WOULDN'T BE THE FIRST KING TO SIT UPON A THRONE WITH BLOOD ON HIS HANDS
WOULDN'T BE THE FIRST IN HIS FAMILY
KORT

BROTHER
WE MEET AGAIN
YOU DON'T SEEM PLEASED TO SEE ME BROTHER
NO

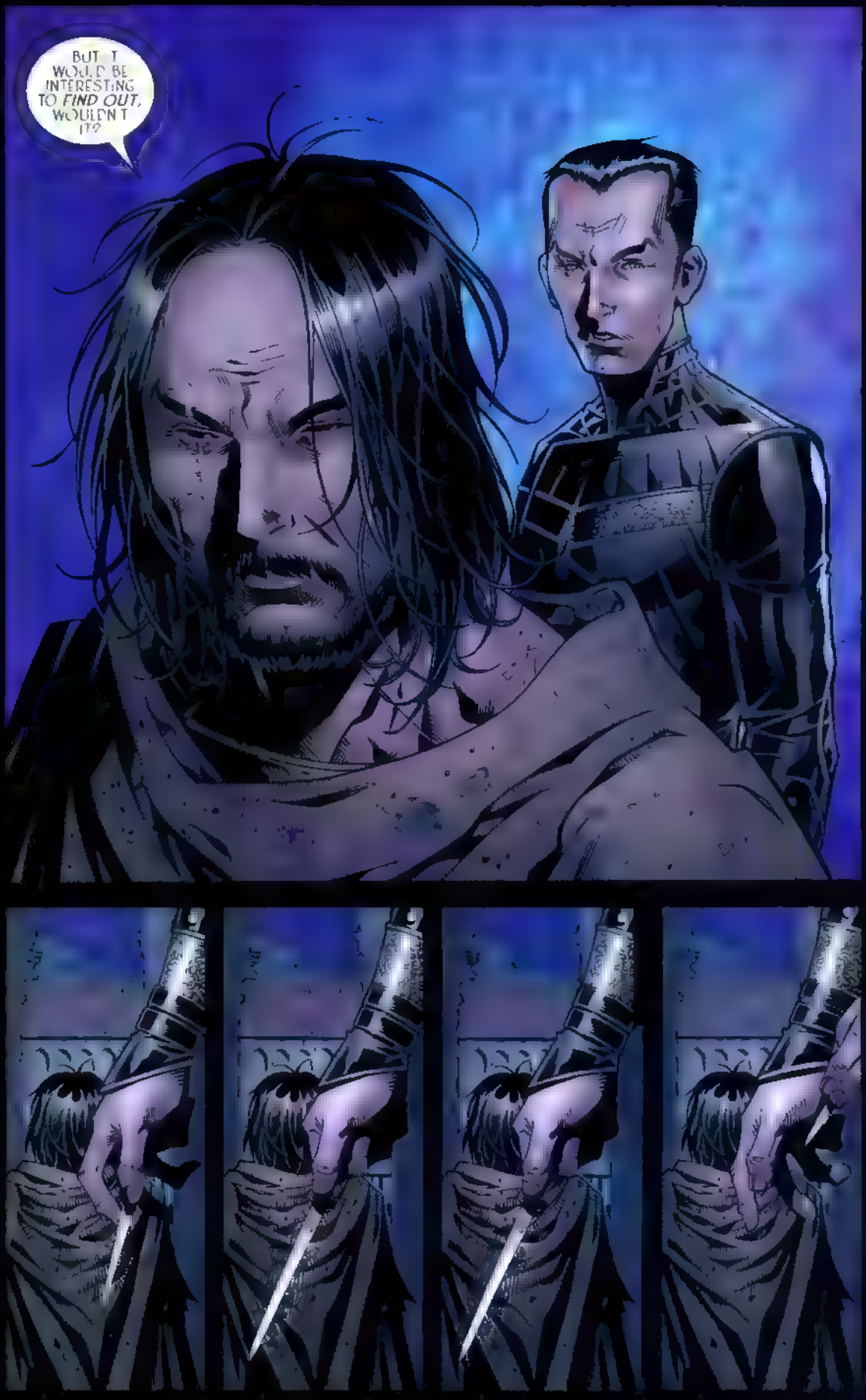
NO, THAT'S NOT IT AT ALL. I'M JUST SURPRISED.
SHOCKED, REALLY.
I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU'RE ALIVE.
SOMETIMES I CAN'T BELIEVE IT MYSELF.
MY LORDS, YOU MUST HAVE A GREAT DEAL TO DISCUSS. I'LL DEPART NOW IF YOU HAVE NO NEED OF ME.
NO, YOU MAY GO.
MY BROTHER AND I DO *INDEED* HAVE MUCH TO DISCUSS.
OF COURSE. THANK YOU.
I'LL LEAVE YOU TO DO WHAT YOU MUST.

THE LORD CHAMBERLAIN WAS ALWAYS A MOST LOYAL ADVISOR TO ME
I TRUST *YOU* FOUND HIM TO BE SO?
HE HAS BEEN OF GREAT HELP TO ME IN RULING THE KINGDOM
I'M SURE
BUT THERE'S OF COURSE NO SUBSTITUTE FOR THE *KING*, THOUGH *IS THERE?*
I'M CURIOUS
HOW *IS IT* THAT YOU SURVIVED? THERE WERE TALES OF YOUR DEATH AT THE HANDS OF THE HERON PRINCE
OF YOUR *BODY* BEING SPIRITED AWAY BY MAI SHEN
I DID SUFFER A *DEFEAT* IN THE ARENA
AN INTERESTING *IRONY*, NO?
AND ETHAN DID INDEED *END* THE WAR
UNFORTUNATE WE FINALLY HAD THE WAR WE WANTED
AND WE COULD NOT TAKE ADVANTAGE

AND WHERE *HAVE* YOU BEEN IN THE MEANTIME?
FOR THAT MATTER WHERE MIGHT *MAI SHEN* BE? SHE DOES NOT ACCOMPANY YOU
DO YOU REMEMBER THE *TALE* FATHER TOLD US WHEN WE WERE BOYS?
ABOUT THE MAN IN THE WILDERNESS?
HE WAS A TRAVELER WHO BECAME LOST IN THE MOUNTAINS ON HIS WAY HOME
WHEN HE DID NOT APPEAR HE WAS PRESUMED DEAD BY ALL THOSE WHO KNEW HIM
HIS WIFE TOOK ANOTHER HUSBAND HIS LANDS AND POSSESSIONS WERE GIVEN OVER TO OTHERS
HE WAS *FORGOTTEN*
BUT THE TRAVELER'S WILL TO SURVIVE WAS GREAT THE TRIALS HE FACED *HONED* HIM
HE BECAME *STRONGER* DURING HIS TIME IN THE WILDERNESS
ONE DAY HE *RETURNED*
HE RETURNED AND WITH HIS NEWFOUND STRENGTH HE *TOOK BACK* ALL THE THINGS THAT WERE HIS
HIS WIFE
HIS LANDS
AND HE *PUNISHED* THOSE WHO HAD TAKEN FROM HIM
FATHER WAS A VERY WISE MAN
IF PERHAPS A LITTLE TOO *TRUSTING* IT'S A TRAGEDY HE'S NO LONGER WITH US

TROY
I'VE TOLD YOU BEFORE BROTHER AS FIRST BORN I KNEW THE THRONE WOULD ONE DAY BE MINE
BUT I COULD NOT IMAGINE IT WOULD COME TO ME IN THE MANNER IN WHICH IT DID
WE NEVER SAW THE VIPER IN OUR MIDST
I KNOW I NEVER SUSPECTED OUR OWN SISTER
I DID PLACE A PRICE ON HER HEAD FOR FATHER'S MURDER
HAVE YOU DONE ANYTHING ABOUT THAT SINCE SHE'S TAKEN UP WITH ETHAN ON THE TOURNAMENT ISLE?
YES WELL HAD I MY PREFERENCE I WOULD NOT SUFFER OUR FATHER'S MURDERER TO LIVE
BUT THERE ARE OTHER FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED
SUCH AS?
THE TIMING OF THINGS
PICKING THE PROPER MOMENT TO PUNISH THE GUILTY
I OWE YOU A GREAT DEBT OF THANKS MORT YOU HAVE DONE A MOST EXCELLENT JOB OF MAINTAINING THE KINGDOM
AS SEEMS TO BE IN ORDER
WHEN I ASCENDED TO THE THRONE I DID NOT THINK I WAS DOING SO AS A CARETAKER
NO I'M SURE YOU DIDN'T

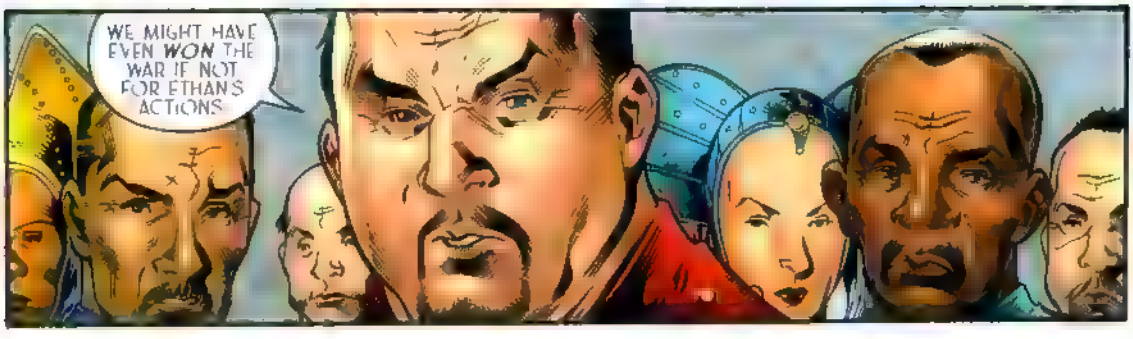
ONCE YOU'VE TASTED THE POWER OF SOVEREIGNTY IT'S HARD TO RELINQUISH IT
I KNOW I WOULD FIND IT TO BE SO
I'M SURE SOME PEOPLE WOULD DO *ANYTHING* TO TAKE POWER
OR TO *KEEP* IT
YOU LOOK *WELL*, BROTHER YOUR WOUNDS MUST HAVE BEEN *SERIOUS* AT THE VERY LEAST
AND YET YOU HEALED
APPARENTLY YOU'RE QUITE HARD TO *KILL*
MAI SHEN'S *GIFT*
I AM GRACED WITH POWER ENOUGH THAT I CAN HEAL VIRTUALLY *ANY* WOUND
I DO WONDER WHAT IT WOULD TAKE TO ACTUALLY KILL ME
STAB ME THROUGH THE HEART CUT OFF MY HEAD?
I CAN'T BE SURE *ANY* OF IT WOULD BE ENOUGH

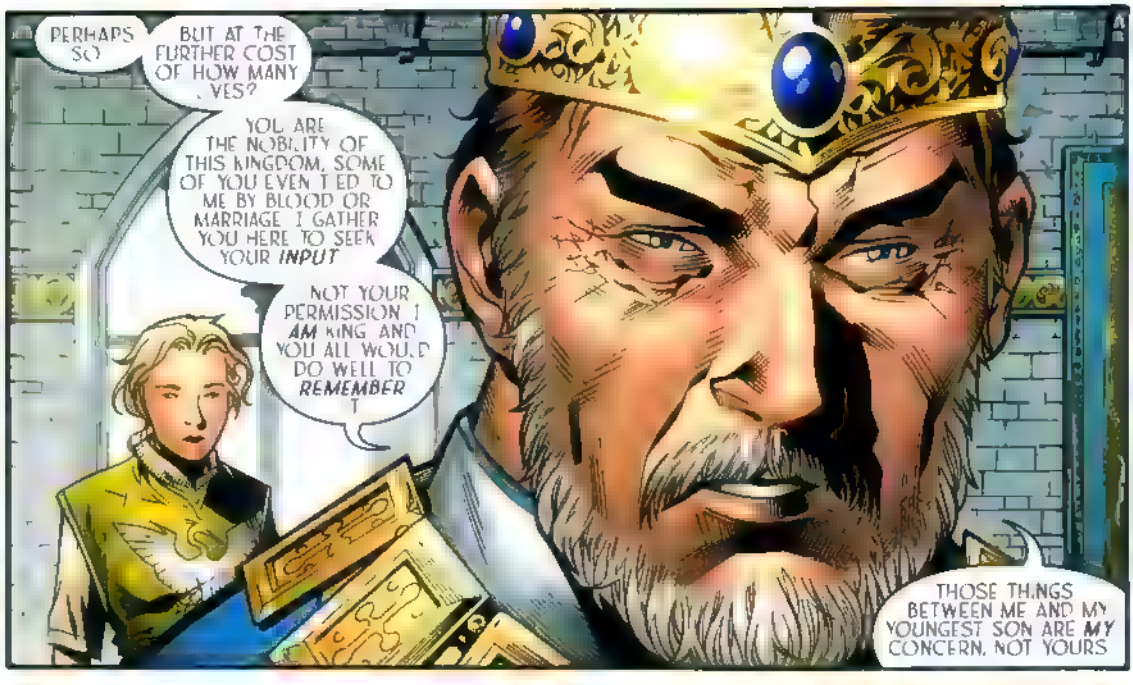

BUT IT WOULD BE INTERESTING TO *FIND OUT*, WOULDN'T IT?

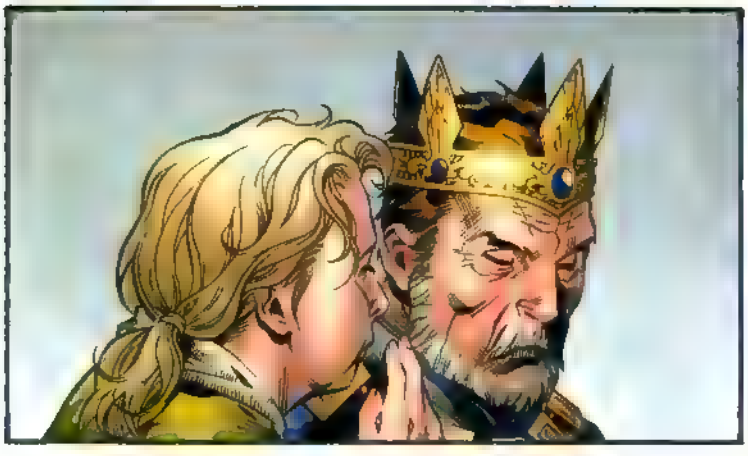
I MUST TELL YOU BROTHER IT'S GOOD TO COME HOME
AND FIND THINGS HAVEN'T REALLY CHANGED

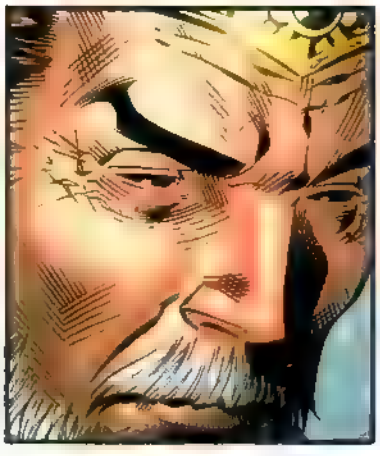
THEY ARE A FREE PEOPLE
AND WE HAVE NO PROPER CAUSE TO STOP THEM
YOUR CONCERNS DO NOT FALL ON DEAF EARS I UNDERSTAND THE HARDSHIP THIS PLACES UPON THE ENTIRETY OF THE HERON KINGDOM
BUT IF CERTAIN MEMBERS OF THE LESSER RACES WISH TO LEAVE FOR THE SANCTUARY ISLE WE HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO LET THEM
BUT YOU ARE THE KING, DANE COULD YOU NOT SIMPLY FORBID IT?
AYE PUT THEM IN THEIR PLACE
WHO WILL LABOR FOR US?

WITH ALL DUE RESPECT SIRE
PERHAPS IF YOU'D BEEN ABLE TO CONTROL YOUR CHILD *NONE* OF THIS WOULD HAVE HAPPENED


WE MIGHT HAVE EVEN *WON* THE WAR IF NOT FOR ETHAN'S ACTIONS


PERHAPS SO
BUT AT THE FURTHER COST OF HOW MANY , YES?
YOU ARE THE NOBILITY OF THIS KINGDOM, SOME OF YOU EVEN T ED TO ME BY BLOOD OR MARRIAGE. I GATHER YOU HERE TO SEEK YOUR *INPUT*
NOT YOUR PERMISSION. I *AM* KING AND YOU ALL WOULD DO WELL TO *REMEMBER* T
THOSE THINGS BETWEEN ME AND MY YOUNGEST SON ARE *MY* CONCERN, NOT YOURS





NEWS
KING BRON OF THE RAVEN DYNASTY IS ALIVE AND HAS RETURNED TO HIS HOMELAND
HOW IS THAT POSSIBLE?
THAT DEMON SPAWN *DIED* ON ETHAN'S SWORD DID HE NOT?
IT'S A RAVEN PLOY IT *MUST* BE
IF BRON TRULY LIVES THE DRUMS OF *WAR* WILL BEAT ONCE MORE
PLEASE, MY FRIENDS THIS IS NOT A TIME FOR *ENMITY*
I ASK THAT YOU TURN YOUR MINDS TO *PEACE*
I BETTER THAN *ANYONE* KNOW THE HARDSHIPS WAR BRINGS I WOULD NOT INFLICT THOSE WOUNDS UPON THIS KINGDOM AGAIN
THOUGH WE HAVE BEEN BITTER ENEMIES IN THE PAST AND SUFFERED GREATLY AT EACH OTHER'S HANDS

I BRON SITS UPON THE OBSIDIAN THRONE WE MUST MAKE A FRIEND OF THE ONCE AND FUTURE RAVEN KING

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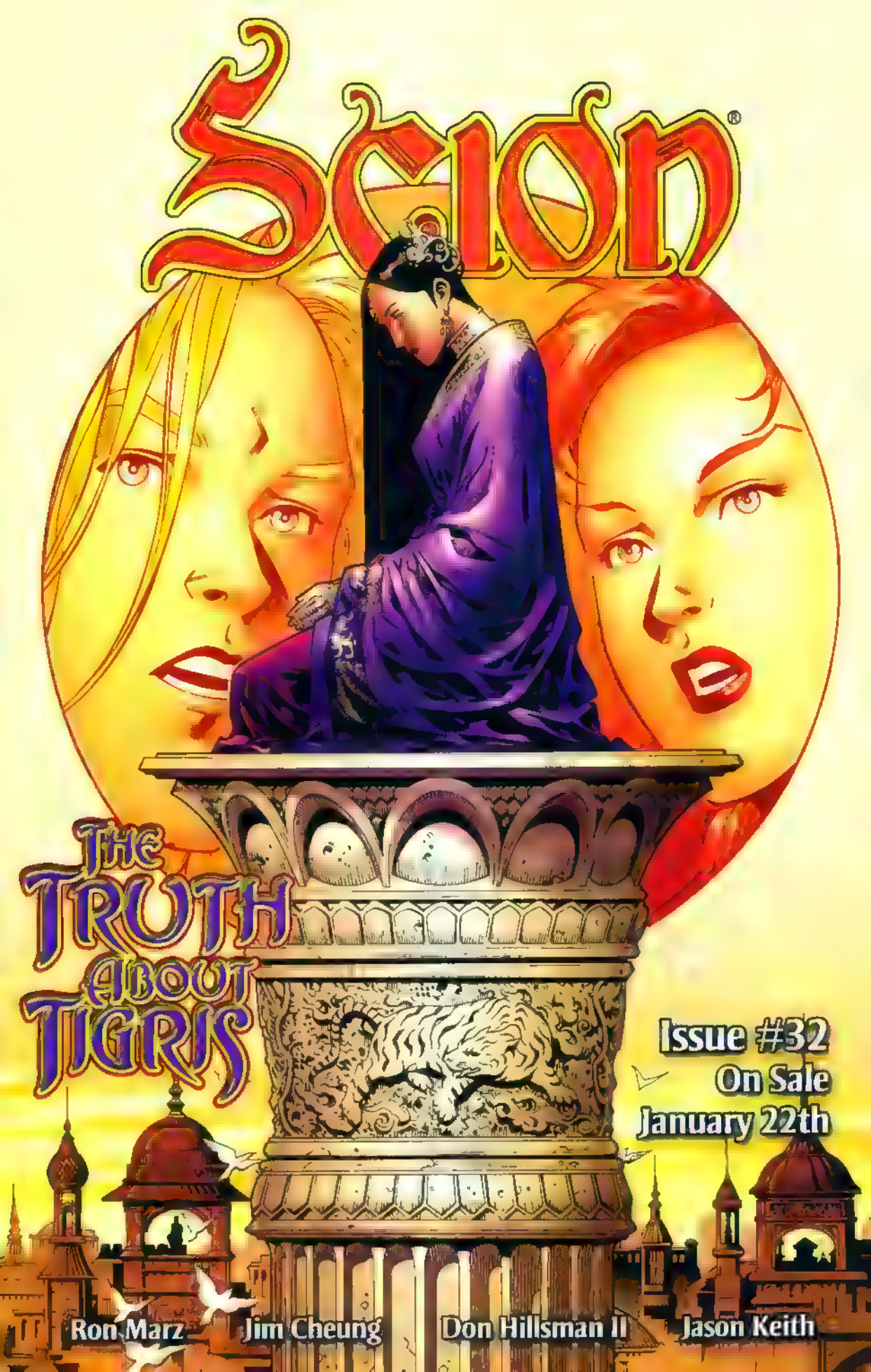
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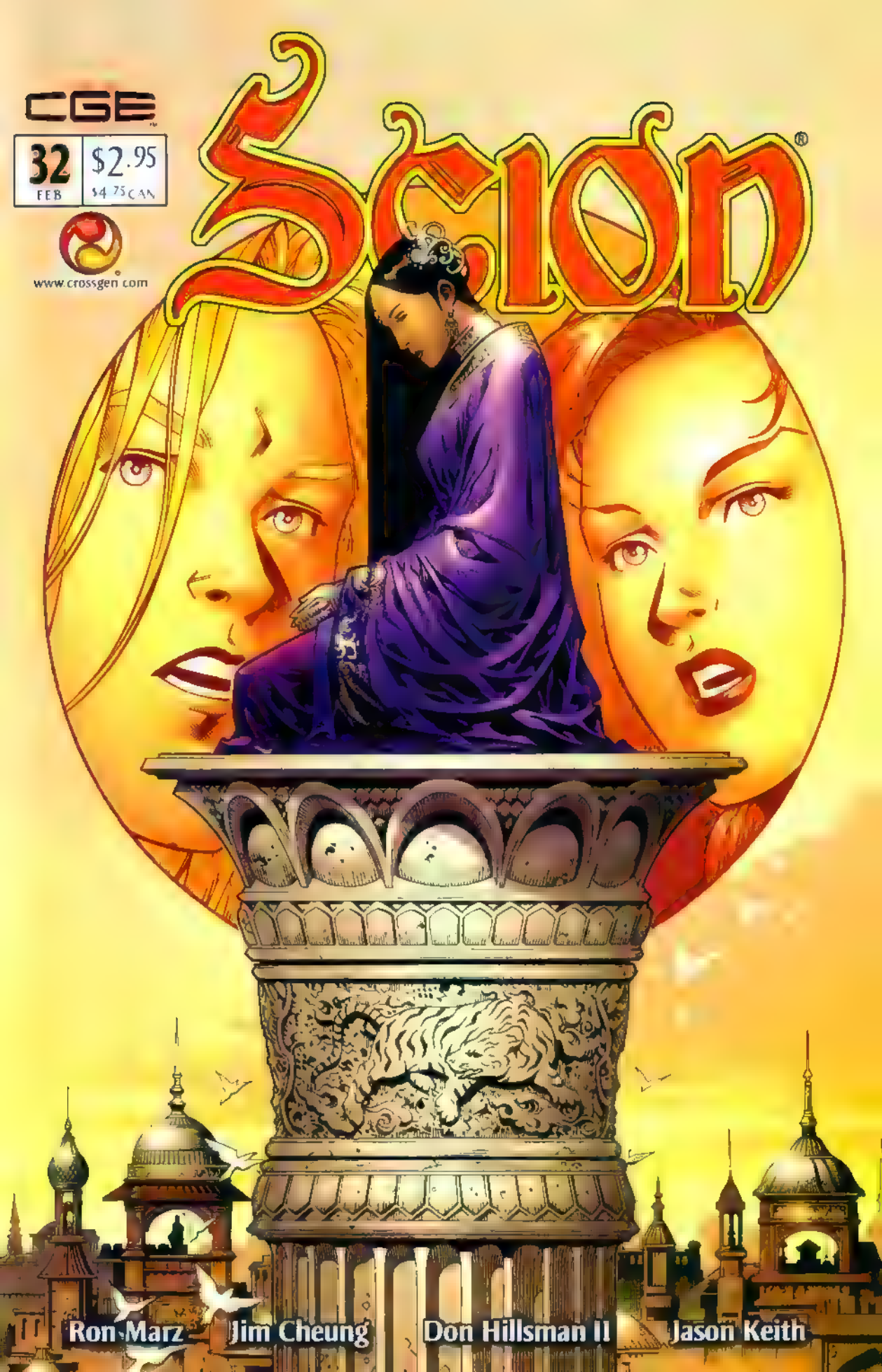
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Thus Far in Scion

Bron

Kort

Dane

Kai

Ylena

What started with a mysterious sigil led to war. Prince Ethan of the West-ruling Heron Dynasty was graced with a mark granting him power, leading to the accidental scarring of Prince Bron of the East-ruling Raven Dynasty during ritual combat.

War between the kingdoms followed, but as the conflict raged, Ethan pledged his loyalty to the Underground movement dedicated to freeing the genetically engineered Lesser Races. His companion in this was Ashleigh, Raven princess and sister to Bron. Eventually the two gave in to their mutual attraction and became lovers.

Ethan and a small band of followers, including his sidekick Skink, the bounty hunter Exeter, and Nadia, a traveler from the far kingdom of Tigris, took control of an island and made it a Sanctuary for the Lesser Races. Ethan then used his power to end the war and apparently slay Bron.

While Ethan, Ashleigh and Nadia journeyed to Tigris in hopes of striking a treaty, Bron returned to Raven lands and reclaimed the Obsidian Throne from his brother Kort. When King Dane received the news of Bron's reappearance, he decided to pursue a permanent peace with the Ravens.

Ethan

Ashleigh

Nadia

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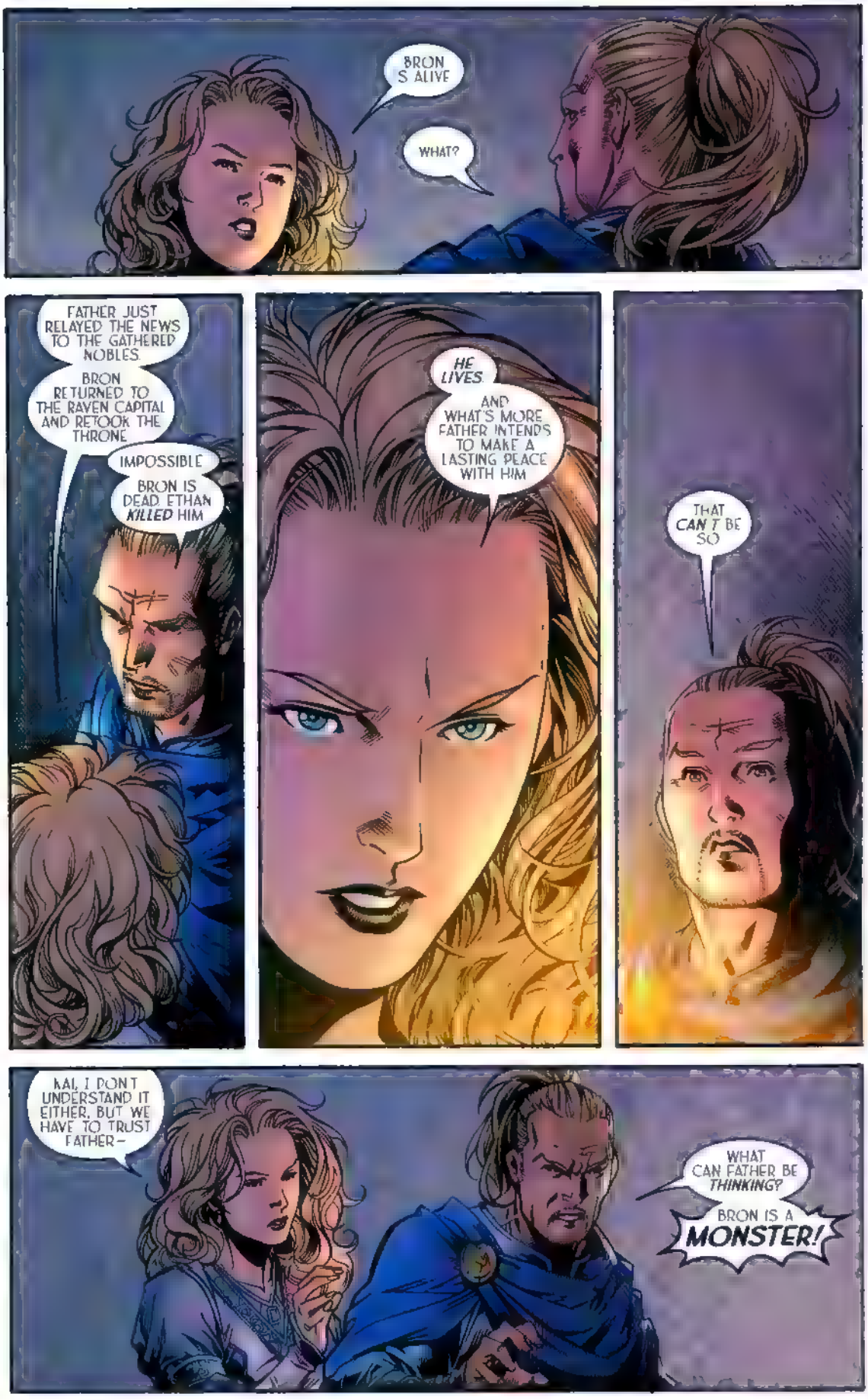
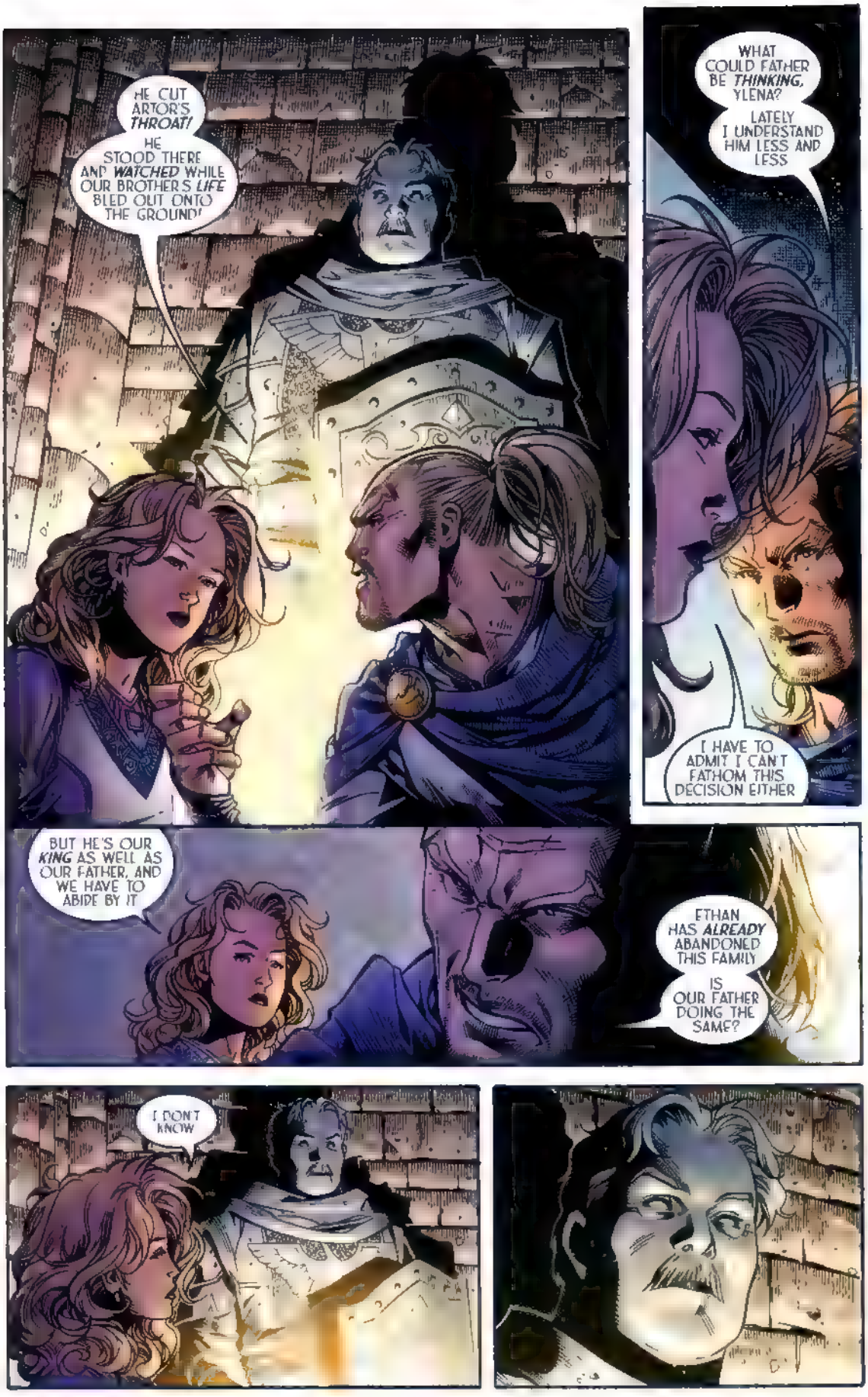
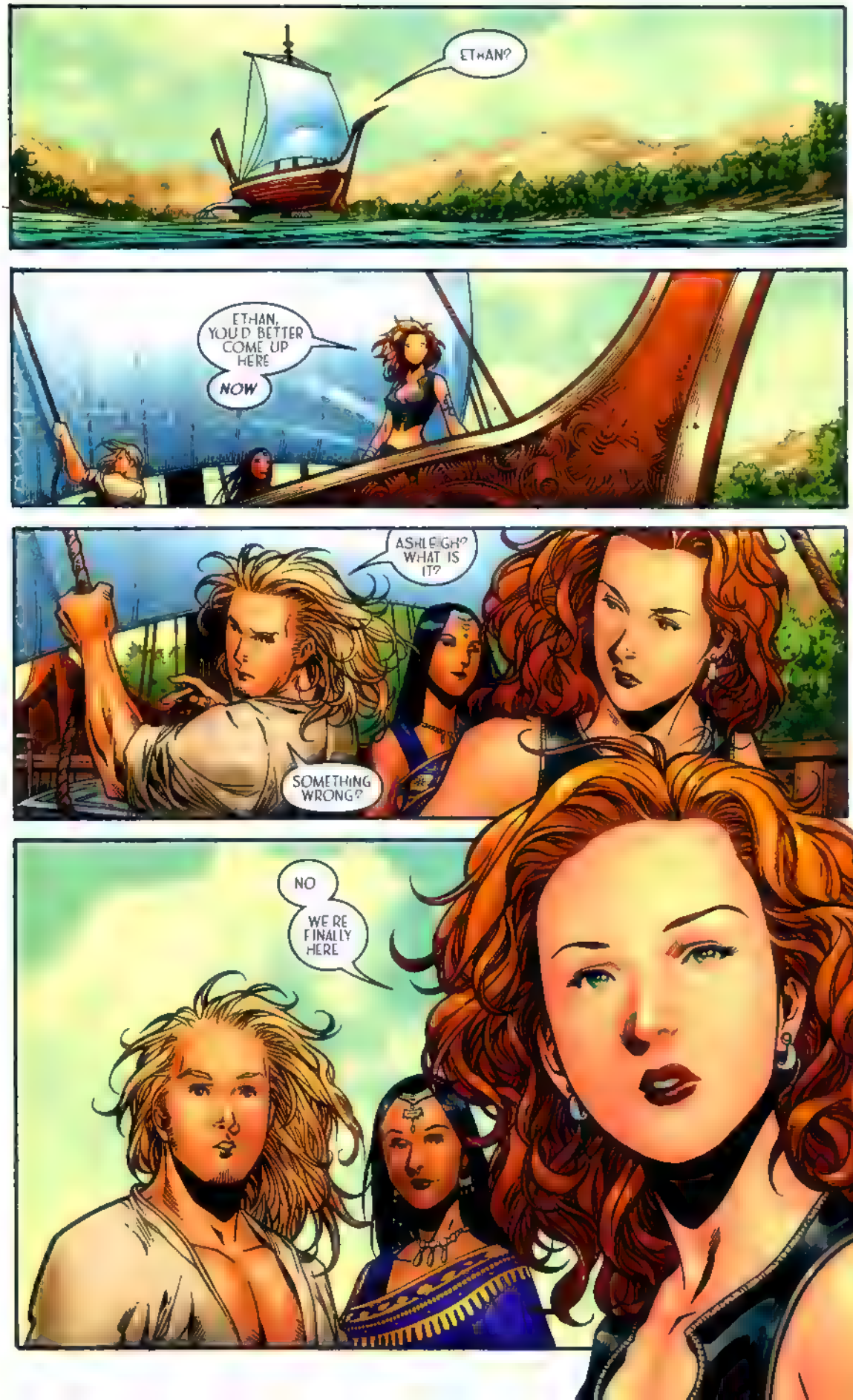
KAI
I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT BE DOWN HERE
YLENA
I JUST COME DOWN HERE TO THINK SOMETIMES
I LIKE THE QUIET
I LIKE BEING WITH ARTOR
KAI WE NEED TO *TALK*


BRON S ALIVE
WHAT?
FATHER JUST RELAYED THE NEWS TO THE GATHERED NOBLES.
BRON RETURNED TO THE RAVEN CAPITAL AND RETOOK THE THRONE.
IMPOSSIBLE.
BRON IS DEAD. ETHAN *KILLED* HIM.
HE LIVES.
AND WHAT'S MORE, FATHER INTENDS TO MAKE A LASTING PEACE WITH HIM.
THAT *CAN'T* BE SO.
KAI, I DON'T UNDERSTAND IT EITHER. BUT WE HAVE TO TRUST FATHER—
WHAT CAN FATHER BE *THINKING?*
BRON IS A *MONSTER!*


HE CUT ARTOR'S THROAT!
HE STOOD THERE AND WATCHED WHILE OUR BROTHER'S LIFE BLED OUT ONTO THE GROUND!
WHAT COULD FATHER BE THINKING, YLENA?
LATELY I UNDERSTAND HIM LESS AND LESS
I HAVE TO ADMIT I CAN'T FATHOM THIS DECISION EITHER
BUT HE'S OUR KING AS WELL AS OUR FATHER, AND WE HAVE TO ABIDE BY IT
ETHAN HAS ALREADY ABANDONED THIS FAMILY
IS OUR FATHER DOING THE SAME?
I DON'T KNOW


ETHAN?
ETHAN, YOU'D BETTER COME UP HERE
NOW
ASHLEIGH? WHAT IS IT?
SOMETHING WRONG?
NO
WE'RE FINALLY HERE

TIGRIS

FATHER!

FATHER, I'VE JUST COME FROM SPEAKING WITH MY *SISTER* SHE TOLD ME THINGS THAT MADE ME WONDER IF HER *MIND* WAS ADDLED

OR IF *YOURS* IS

BRON *LIVES?* AND YOU INTEND TO MAKE *PEACE* WITH HIM?

ALL YOU SAY IS TRUE KAI

AND IT *MUST* BE SO

YOU WOULD MAKE PEACE WITH YOUR SON'S *MURDERER?* HOW CAN—

BECAUSE I AM *KING* AND I DEEM IT NECESSARY KAI

YOU HAVE MUCH TO LEARN BEFORE YOU WILL *EVER* BE READY TO ASSUME THE THRONE

WE WILL MEET WITH BRON AND COME TO AN ACCORD

THE *MESSAGE* HAS ALREADY BEEN SENT

MY LIEGE

A *MESSAGE* HAS BEEN RECEIVED FROM KING DANE OF THE HERON KINGDOM

HE WISHES TO SUE FOR A LASTING PEACE BETWEEN HIS KINGDOM AND OURS HE WISHES A SUMMIT

AT A TIME AND PLACE OF *OUR* CHOOSING

IN ORDER TO DISCUSS TERMS

GOOD

LET *THEM* COME TO US

DO YOU *TRUST* THEM?

IF THEY TRULY WERE ANXIOUS FOR PEACE WHY DID THEY NOT MAKE THIS EFFORT WHEN *KORT* SAT UPON THE THRONE?

THE HERONS EXTEND A HAND IN AMITY LET US NOT VILIFY THEM FOR DOING SO

WE MUST NOT IGNORE AN OPPORTUNITY TO BRING PEACE TO AVALON

I BELIEVE ALL THIS WILL *END* QUITE WELL INDEED

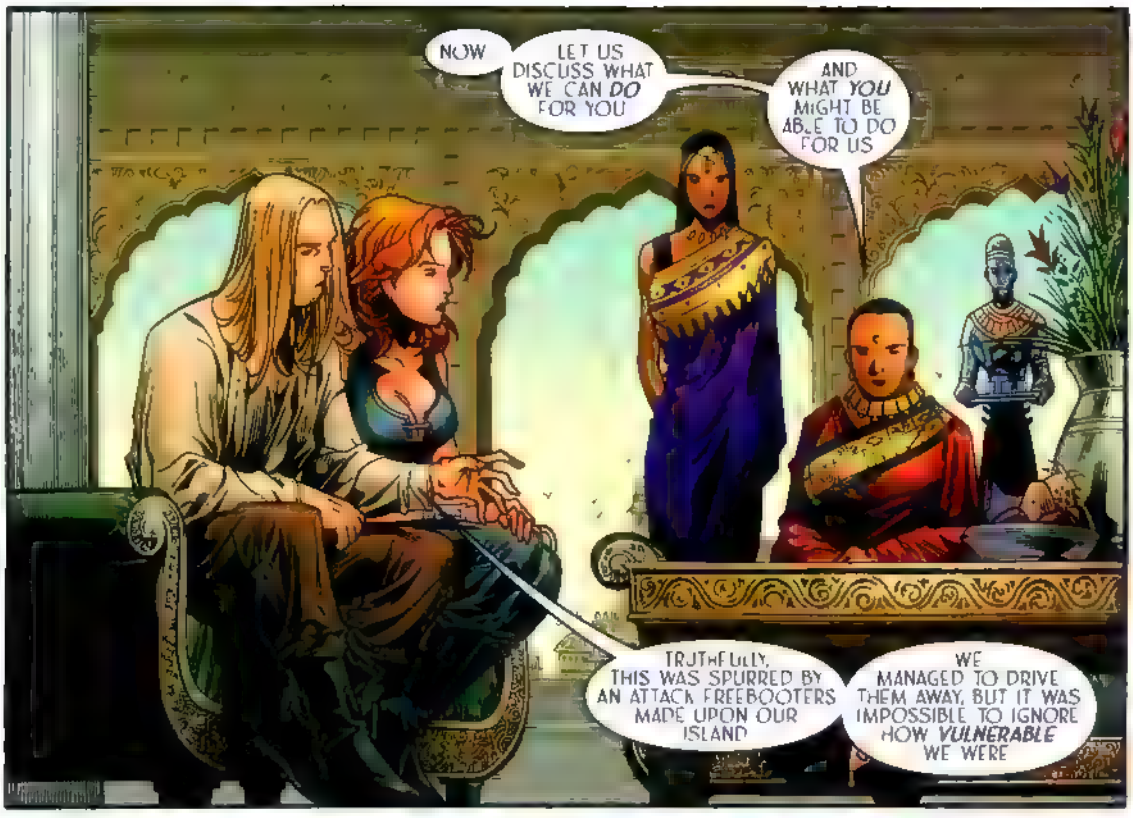
TIGRIS WAS FOUNDED BY SEPARATISTS WHO BROKE AWAY FROM BOTH THE RAVEN AND HERON KINGDOMS CENTURIES AGO
OUR ANCESTORS DIDN'T *BELIEVE* IN THE CREATION OF THE LESSER RACES TO LABOR IN THEIR STEAD
SO THEY LEFT THEIR HOMES AND SET OUT IN SEARCH OF A *NEW* LAND
SOMEWHERE THEY COULD LIVE AS THEY CHOSE
THEY'D SAILED HALFWAY AROUND AVALON BEFORE THEY FOUND THIS COAST AND TREKKED UPRIVER TO FOUND THE CITY
EVENTUALLY THEY INTERMARRIED WITH THE PEOPLE WHO WERE NATIVE TO THIS LAND
AND *THIS* IS WHAT THEY CREATED
THE ADVANCEMENTS YOU SEE ARE THE RESULT OF RELYING ON *TECHNOLOGY* RATHER THAN *FORCED LABOR* TO TAME THEIR NEW HOME

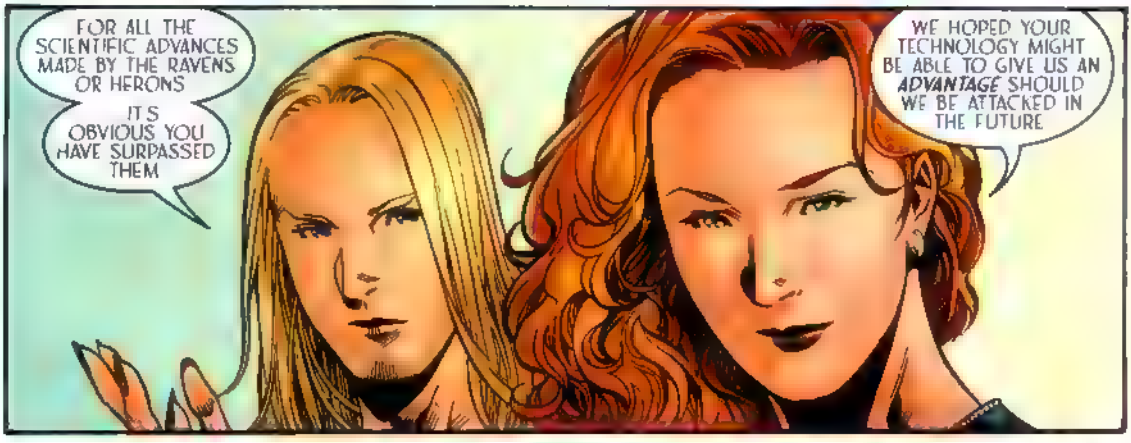
IT'S AMAZING, NADIA
I'VE NEVER SEEN A CITY LIKE THIS
YOU MUST BE WEARY FROM THE JOURNEY I'LL TAKE YOU TO A PLACE WHERE YOU CAN REST
TRUTHFULLY, I THINK WE'D RATHER DEVOTE OURSELVES TO WHY WE CAME HERE, IF THAT'S POSSIBLE
IF WE CAN STRIKE AN ALLIANCE THAT WILL HELP PROTECT THE SANCTUARY ISLE THE SOONER THE BETTER
AS YOU WISH ETHAN
I DO HAVE A CERTAIN RELATIONSHIP WITH THE LEADERSHIP OF TIGRIS
THE GOVERNMENT CENTER ISN'T FAR, AND I CAN ALMOST GUARANTEE AN AUDIENCE
DEET
IT JUST STOPS FOR YOU?
OUR TRANSPORTS RUN ON MAGNETIC FIELDS. THEY'RE SUMMONED BY CURBSIDE CONTROLS
SUCH THINGS ARE FOR EVERYONE'S USE HERE
WE OF TIGRIS BELIEVE IN THE ABSOLUTE EQUALITY OF ALL

YOU CAN SEE ALL THAT TIGRIS HAS ACCOMPLISHED WE WOULD HAVE MUCH TO OFFER YOU IN AN ALLIANCE, ETHAN
NADIA, IF TIGRIS HAS ALWAYS KEPT ITSELF SO ISOLATED
HOW DID YOU COME TO BE IN RAVEN LANDS IN THE FIRST PLACE?
NOT EVERYONE IN TIGRIS WISHES TO REMAIN ISOLATED I VENTURED BEYOND THESE SHORES BECAUSE I WAS CURIOUS ABOUT THE REST OF THE WORLD
SOME BELIEVE IT IS TIME TIGRIS BEGAN TO ONCE AGAIN INTERACT WITH THE OUTSIDE WORLD
WE'RE HERE

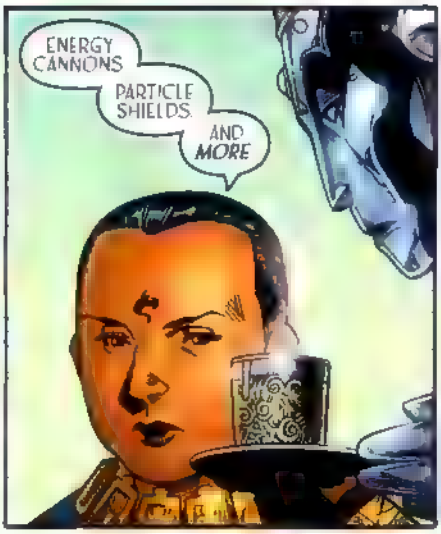
THE KHANATE AWAITS WITHIN
WELCOME
I AM THE KHANATE MAHINDA
YOU MUST BE *ETHAN*, AND YOU, *ASHLEIGH*
NAPIA HAS CONTACTED ME AND TOLD ME SOMETHING OF YOU
WE OF TIGRIS HAVE LIMITED FAMILIARITY WITH THE OUTSIDE WORLD
BUT SCIONS OF THE RAVEN AND HERON DYNASTIES TOGETHER MUST BE FAIRLY WELL UNPRECEDENTED

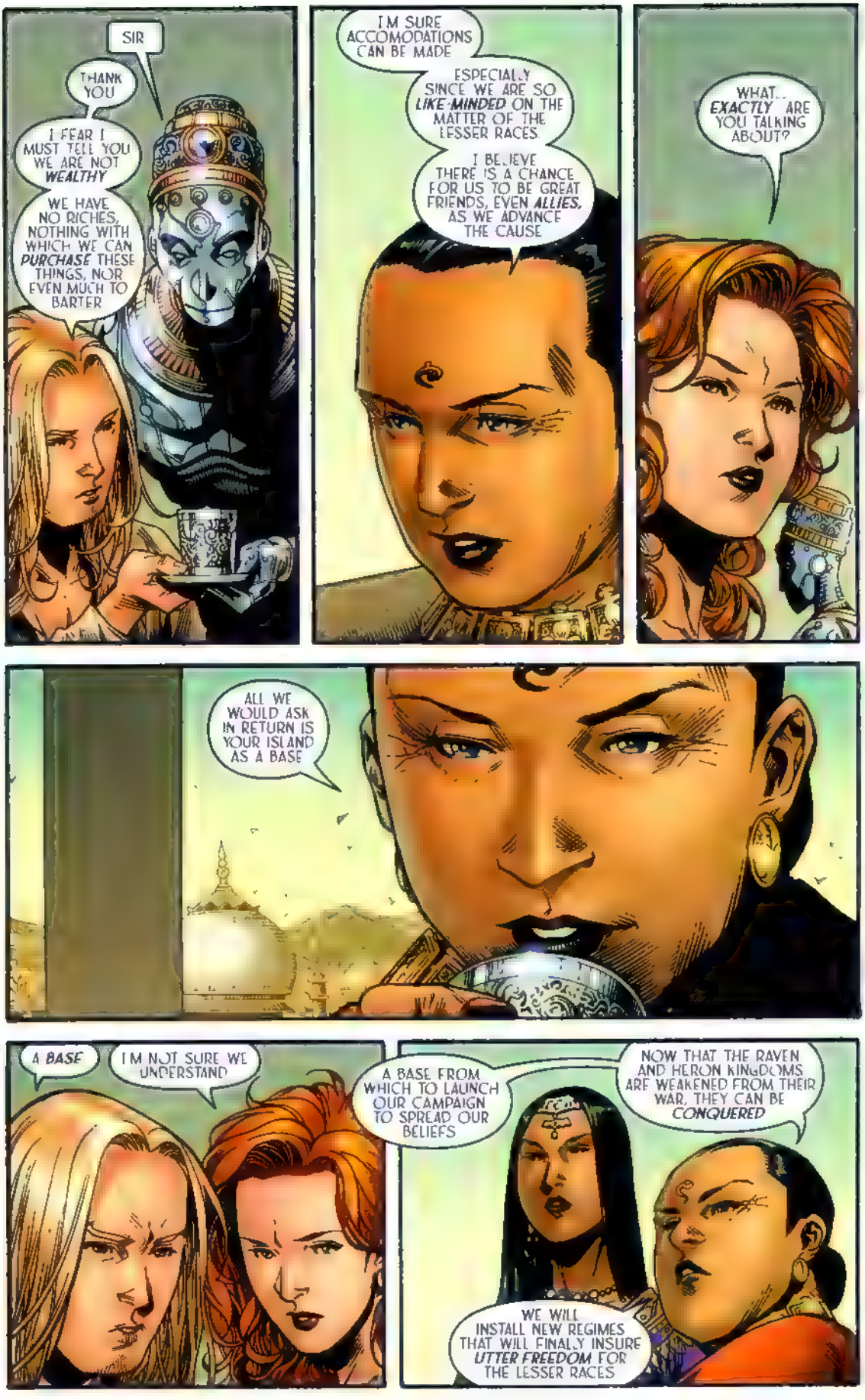
THANK YOU FOR RECEIVING US
OF COURSE
I TRUST YOUR JOURNEY WAS PLEASANT?
NADIA WAS AN *EXCELLENT* GUIDE
YES
SHE IS INDEED ONE OF OUR MOST TRUSTED AGENTS
MY PURPOSE IS TO SERVE, KHANATE
YOUR CITY IS MOST IMPRESSIVE
ITS BEAUTY IS SURPASSED ONLY BY THE ADVANCEMENTS YOU'VE MADE
WE *ARE* PROUD OF WHAT WE HAVE CREATED
IT'S MY UNDERSTANDING THAT *YOU* SHOULD BE AS WELL
FOUNDING A KINGDOM WHERE WHAT YOU REFER TO AS *THE LESSER RACES* ARE NO LONGER ABUSED BY THEIR CREATORS
YOU HAVE MY ADMIRATION
I'M FLATTERED
THE SAFETY OF THE SANCTUARY ISLE IS WHAT BROUGHT US TO YOUR LAND
UNDERSTANDABLY SO
LET US ADDRESS THESE MATTERS IN A CIVILIZED FASHION
SPICE TEA FOR OUR GUESTS, PLEASE


NOW
LET US DISCUSS WHAT WE CAN *DO* FOR YOU
AND WHAT *YOU* MIGHT BE ABLE TO DO FOR US
TRUTHFULLY, THIS WAS SPURRED BY AN ATTACK FREEBOOTERS MADE UPON OUR ISLAND
WE MANAGED TO DRIVE THEM AWAY, BUT IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO IGNORE HOW *VULNERABLE* WE WERE


FOR ALL THE SCIENTIFIC ADVANCES MADE BY THE RAVENS OR HERONS
IT'S OBVIOUS YOU HAVE SURPASSED THEM
WE HOPED YOUR TECHNOLOGY MIGHT BE ABLE TO GIVE US AN *ADVANTAGE* SHOULD WE BE ATTACKED IN THE FUTURE

I FEEL REASONABLY SURE WE COULD PROVIDE CERTAIN ITEMS THAT WOULD PROVE A DETERRENT TO YOUR ENEMIES


ENERGY CANNONS
PARTICLE SHIELDS
AND *MORE*


SIR
THANK YOU
I FEAR I MUST TELL YOU WE ARE NOT WEALTHY
WE HAVE NO RICHES, NOTHING WITH WHICH WE CAN PURCHASE THESE THINGS, NOR EVEN MUCH TO BARTER
I'M SURE ACCOMODATIONS CAN BE MADE
ESPECIALLY SINCE WE ARE SO LIKE-MINDED ON THE MATTER OF THE LESSER RACES
I BELIEVE THERE IS A CHANCE FOR US TO BE GREAT FRIENDS, EVEN ALLIES, AS WE ADVANCE THE CAUSE
WHAT... EXACTLY ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
ALL WE WOULD ASK IN RETURN IS YOUR ISLAND AS A BASE
A BASE
I'M NOT SURE WE UNDERSTAND
A BASE FROM WHICH TO LAUNCH OUR CAMPAIGN TO SPREAD OUR BELIEFS
NOW THAT THE RAVEN AND HERON KINGDOMS ARE WEAKENED FROM THEIR WAR, THEY CAN BE CONQUERED
WE WILL INSTALL NEW REGIMES THAT WILL FINALY INSURE UTTER FREEDOM FOR THE LESSER RACES

YOU
...YOU EXPECT US TO HELP YOU *CONQUER* OUR KINGDOMS?
ARE YOU *MAD?*
I TRULY EXPECTED YOU TO BE *AGREEABLE* TO THIS
WHY *WOULD* YOU BE AVERSE TO SUCH AN AGREEMENT? DO WE NOT SHARE THE SAME VIEWS ON THE LESSER RACES?
YOU HAVE *BROKEN* WITH THE RAVEN AND HERON KINGDOMS
WHY WOULD YOU STAND IN THE WAY OF THEIR UNJUST MONARCHIES BEING SWEPT AWAY?
BECAUSE WHATEVER OUR DIFFERENCES, WE WOULD *NEVER* ALLOW THEM TO FALL UNDER ANOTHER'S CONTROL
TIGRIS HAS BEEN ISOLATED LONG ENOUGH. WE MERELY WISH TO EXPAND OUR BELIEFS
OUR *WAY OF LIFE*
TO THE REST OF AVALON
WE'VE COME HERE IN *ERROR*

PERHAPS I SHOULD APOLOGIZE FOR WASTING YOUR TIME WITH THIS MISUNDERSTANDING
OBVIOUSLY YOU WERE *MISINFORMED* AS TO OUR INTENTIONS.
OR YOU WERE DELIBERATELY *MISLED*.
IT'S SOMETIMES HARD TO KNOW *WHO* CAN BE TRUSTED
TAKE THIS AS ADVICE OR A *WARNING*, WHICHEVER YOU PREFER
TIGRIS WOULD DO WELL TO STAY CLEAR OF ANY INVOLVEMENT WITH THE RAVEN AND HERON KINGDOMS
WE'LL SEE *OURSELVES* OUT
I'M SORRY, ETHAN
BUT WE CAN'T ALLOW YOU TO LEAVE
DON'T TRY TO STOP US, NADIA
YOU *KNOW* WHAT I CAN DO

AAGH!
BUT YOU REALLY DON'T KNOW WHAT I CAN DO
YOU TRAITOROUS WITCH!

IMPOSSIBLE
GHRK
YOU MUST NOT WARN YOUR KINGDOMS OF WHAT'S TO COME
ghh
SHHNK

I WARNED YOU.
Hhh

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Ron Marz
WRITER

Jim Cheung
PENCILER

Don Hillsman II
INKER

Jason Keith
COLORIST

Oscar Gongora
LETTERER

The CrossGen Universe created by Mark Alessi & Tina M. Villa

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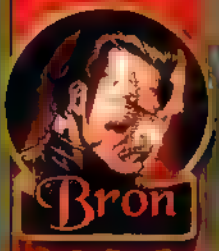
Thus Far in Scion



What started with a mysterious sigil led to war. Prince Ethan of the West-ruling Heron Dynasty was graced with a mark granting him power, leading to the accidental scarring of Prince Bron of the East-ruling Raven Dynasty during ritual combat.

War between the kingdoms followed, but as the conflict raged, Ethan pledged his loyalty to the Underground movement dedicated to freeing the genetically engineered Lesser Races. His companion in this was Ashleigh, Raven princess and sister to Bron. Eventually the two gave in to their mutual attraction and became lovers.

Ethan and a small band of followers, including his sidekick Skink, the bounty hunter Exeter, and Nadia, a traveler from the far kingdom of Tigris, took control of an island and made it a Sanctuary for the Lesser Races. Ethan then used his power to end the war.

Bron returned to Raven lands and reclaimed the Obsidian Throne. When King Dane received the news of Bron's reappearance, he decided to pursue a lasting peace with the Ravens. Meanwhile, Ethan, Ashleigh, and Nadia journeyed to Tigris in hopes of striking a treaty, but the true intentions of Tigris were laid bare — conquest of the Raven and Heron kingdoms. Nadia was revealed as an android and Ethan and Ashleigh were captured.

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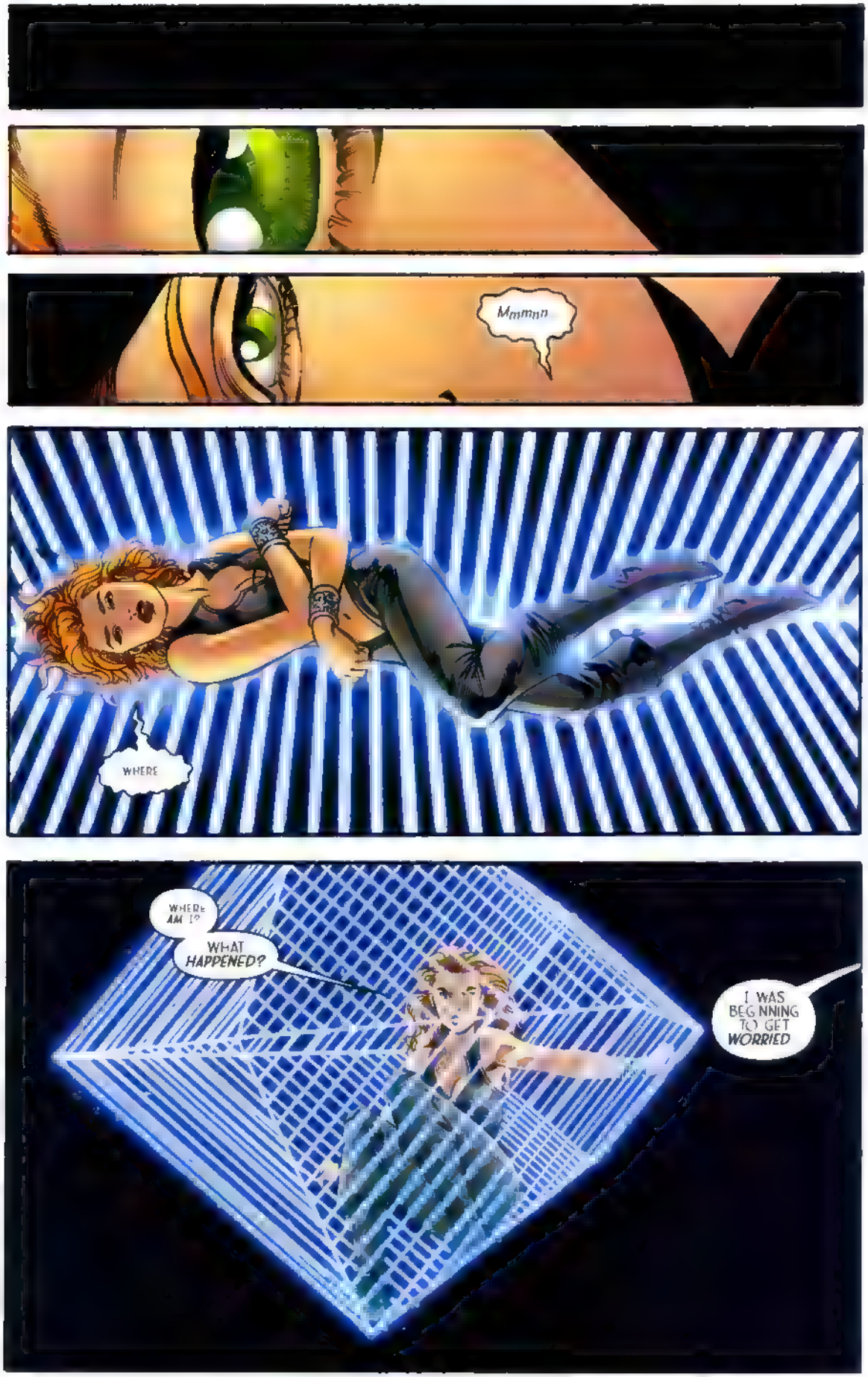
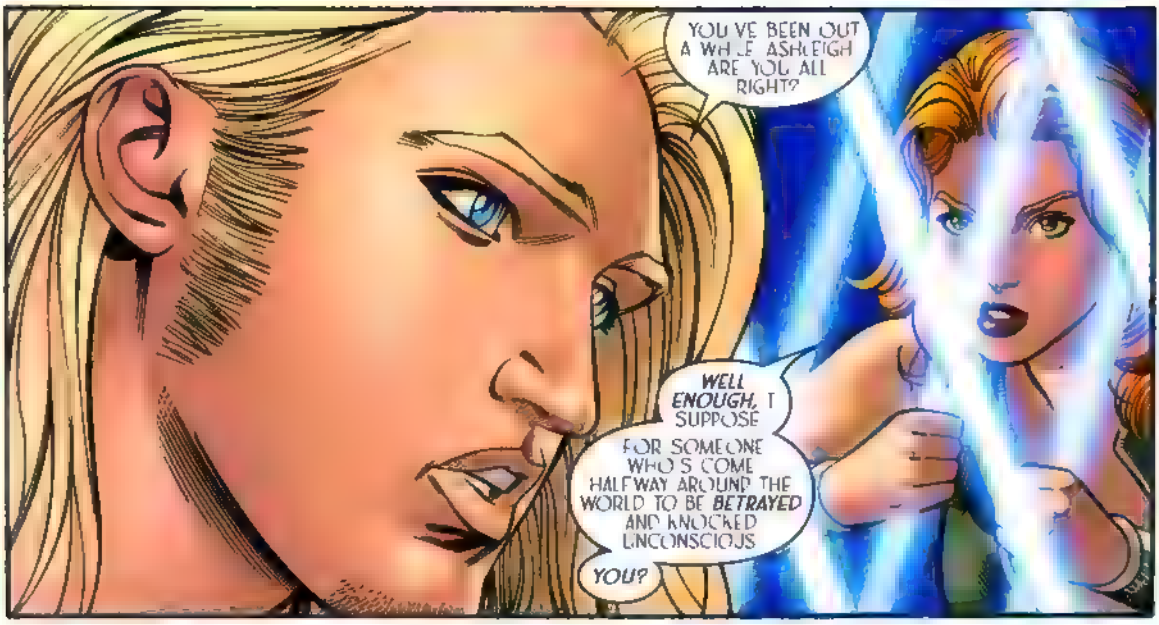
IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN, DANE

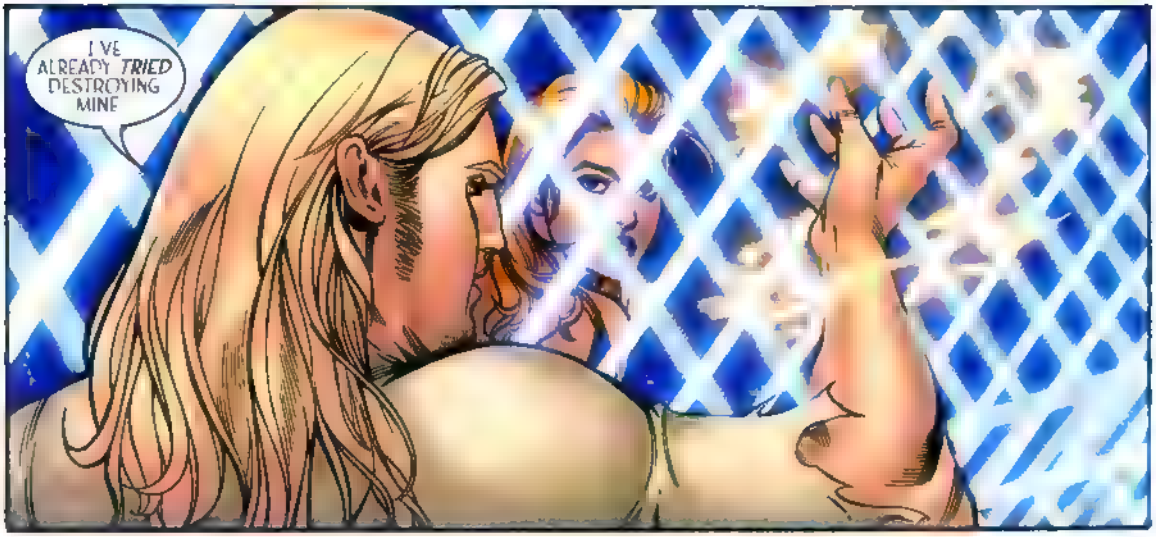
THE MAN WHO KILLED OUR BROTHER AND THERE STANDS FATHER *SHAKING HANDS* WITH HIM
THIS VILLA'S ON *THEIR* SOIL KAI KEEP A CIVIL TONGUE
OR AT LEAST A *QUIETER* ONE
YOU SHOULD BE SATISFIED I DON'T GO CUT BRON'S *THROAT*, YLENA
AS *HE* DID TO ARTOR
I SUSPECT THAT MIGHT NOT BE THE WISEST COURSE OF ACTION AT A *PEACE CONFERENCE*
WE HAD PEACE WITH THE RAVENS FOR CENTURES BEFORE THE WAR
FATHERS DECIDED WE'D HAVE IT AGAIN
BUT I HOPE THE *PRICE* ISN'T TOO MUCH TO BEAR

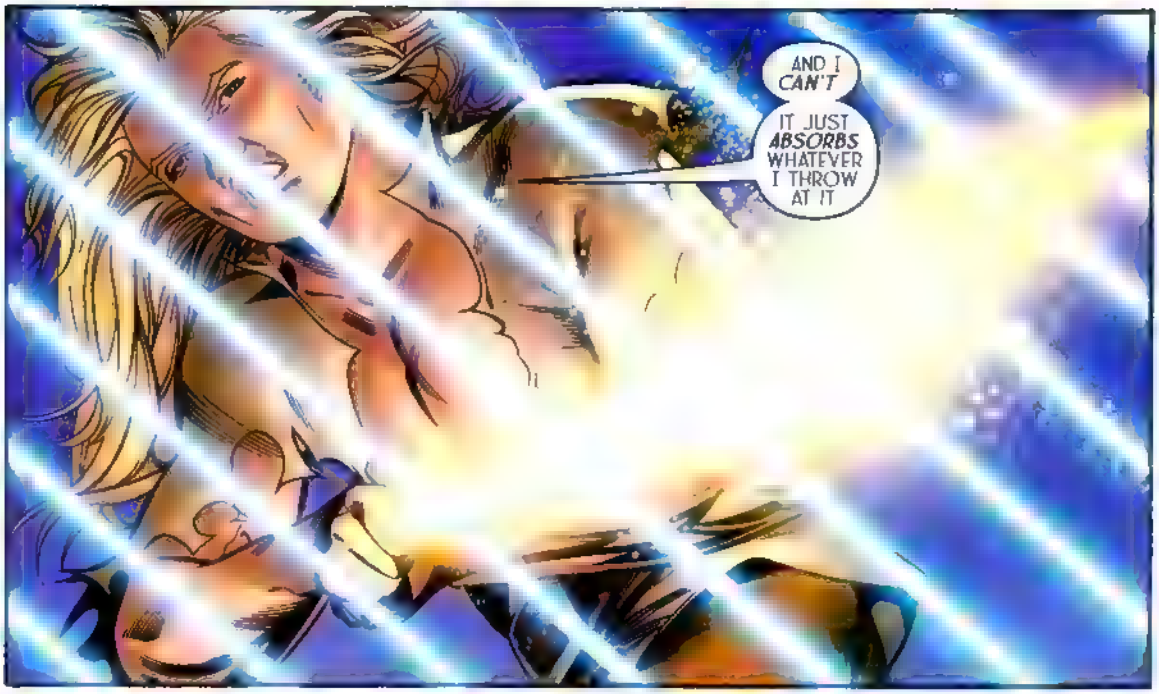

Mmmm
WHERE
WHERE AM I?
WHAT HAPPENED?
I WAS BEG NNING TO GET WORRIED


YOU'VE BEEN OUT A WHILE ASHLEIGH ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
WELL ENOUGH, I SUPPOSE
FOR SOMEONE WHO'S COME HALFWAY AROUND THE WORLD TO BE BETRAYED AND KNOCKED UNCONSCIOUS
YOU?

BIT OF A HEADACHE FROM THAT SHOCK NADIA GAVE ME, BUT OTHERWISE I'M FINE
SO WHERE ARE WE, ETHAN?
SOME SORT OF HOLDING CELLS, OBVIOUSLY I CAN ONLY ASSUME WE'RE STILL IN TIGRIS

WE'LL SEE HOW LONG THEY CAN HOLD US
THESE CAGES CAN'T STAND UP TO YOUR POWER CAN THEY?

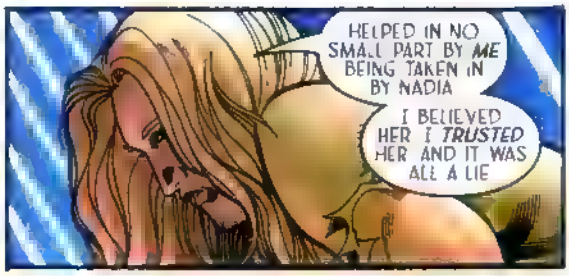

I'VE ALREADY TRIED DESTROYING MINE


AND I CAN'T
IT JUST ABSORBS WHATEVER I THROW AT IT

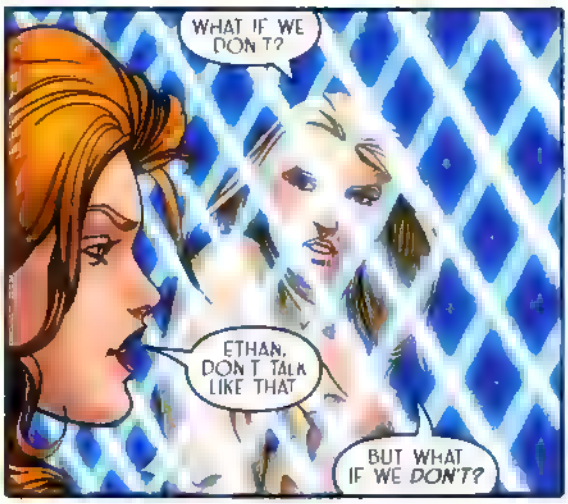
WE'RE STUCK

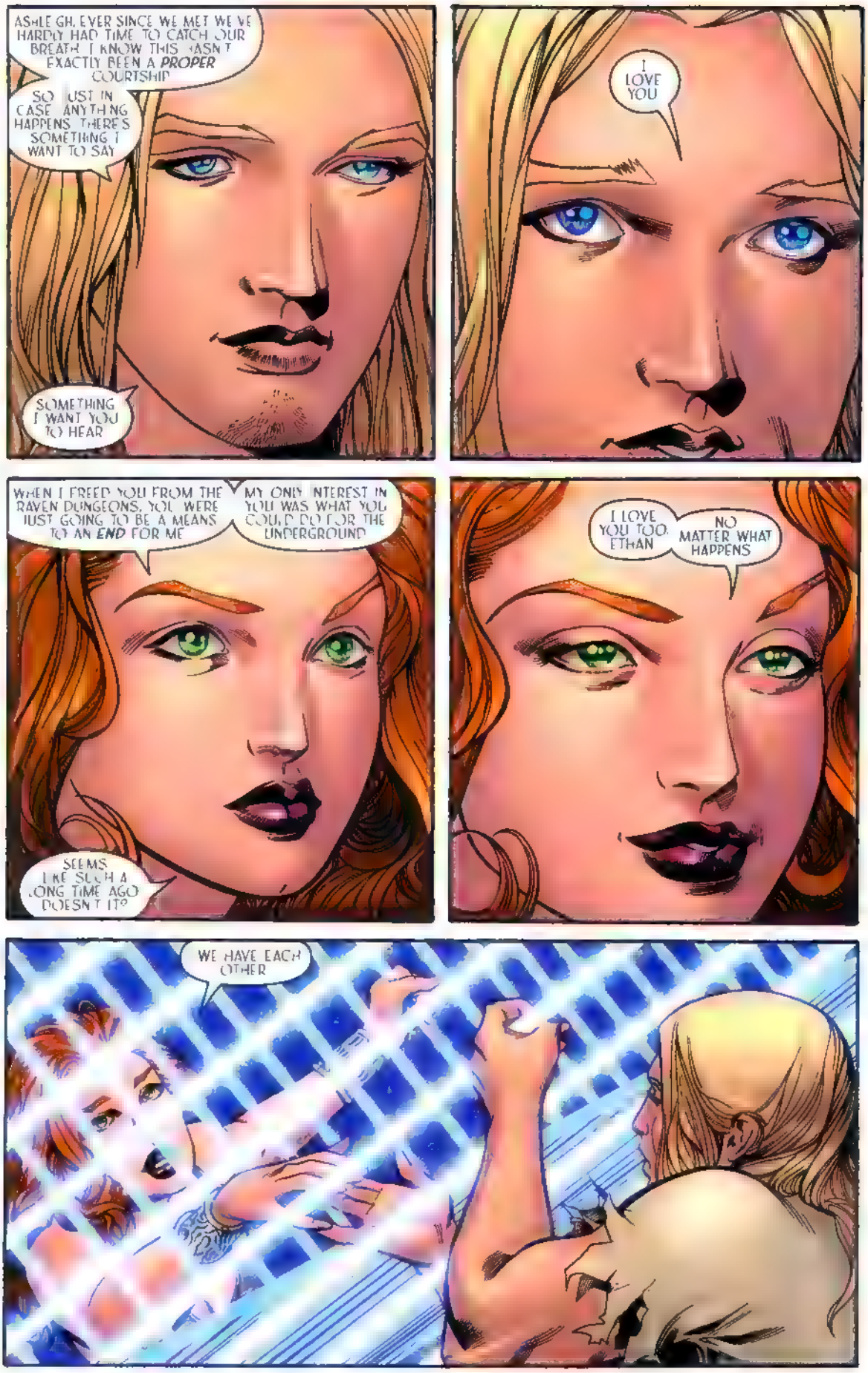
MAYBE FOR THE MOMENT BUT WE'RE NOT GOING TO ACCEPT THAT
WE HAVE TO FIND A WAY TO GET FREE..

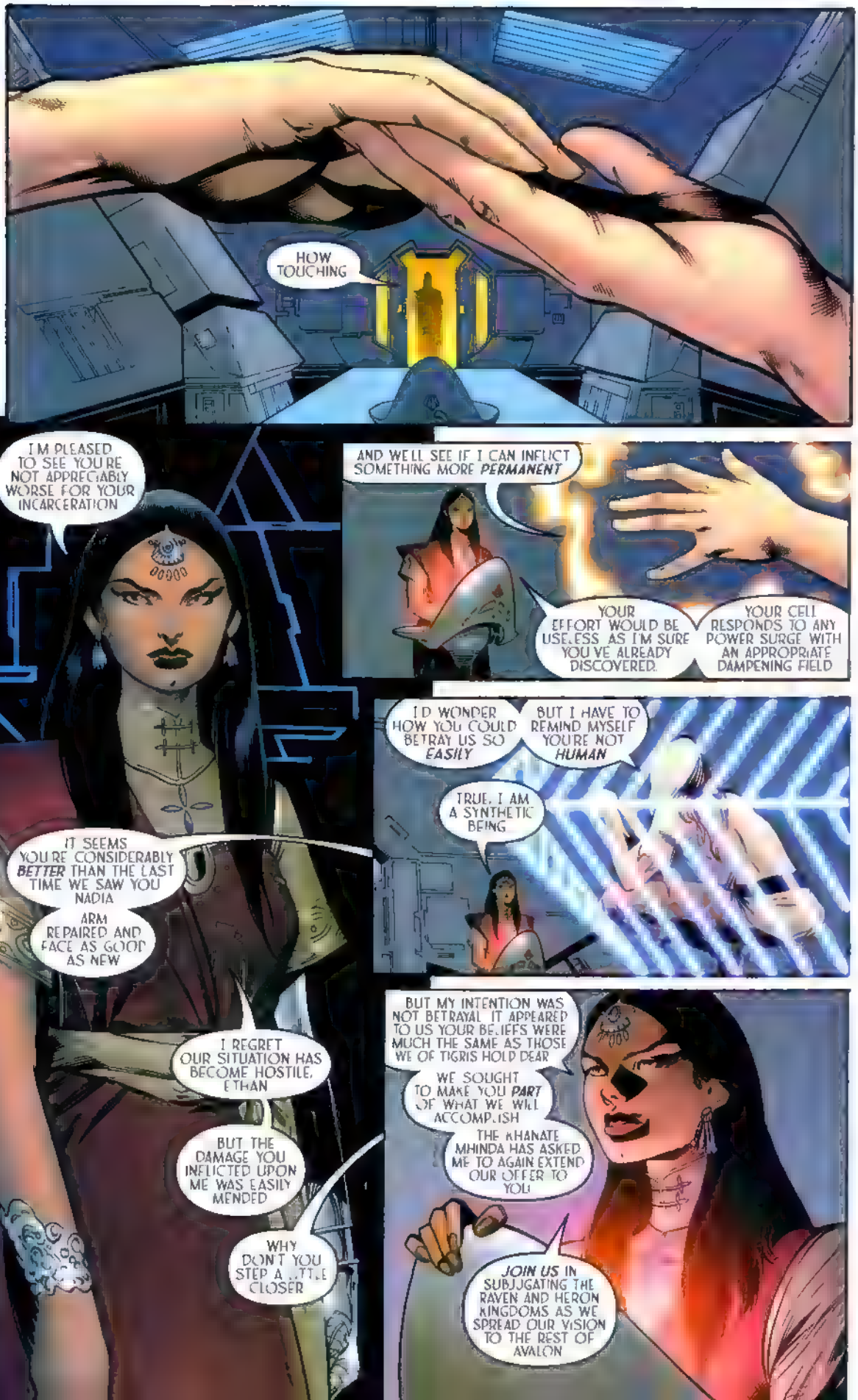
WE HAVE TO WARN OUR KINGDOMS THAT TIGRIS IS PLANNING AN INVASION


HELPED IN NO SMALL PART BY ME BEING TAKEN IN BY NADIA
I BELIEVED HER I TRUSTED HER AND IT WAS ALL A LIE

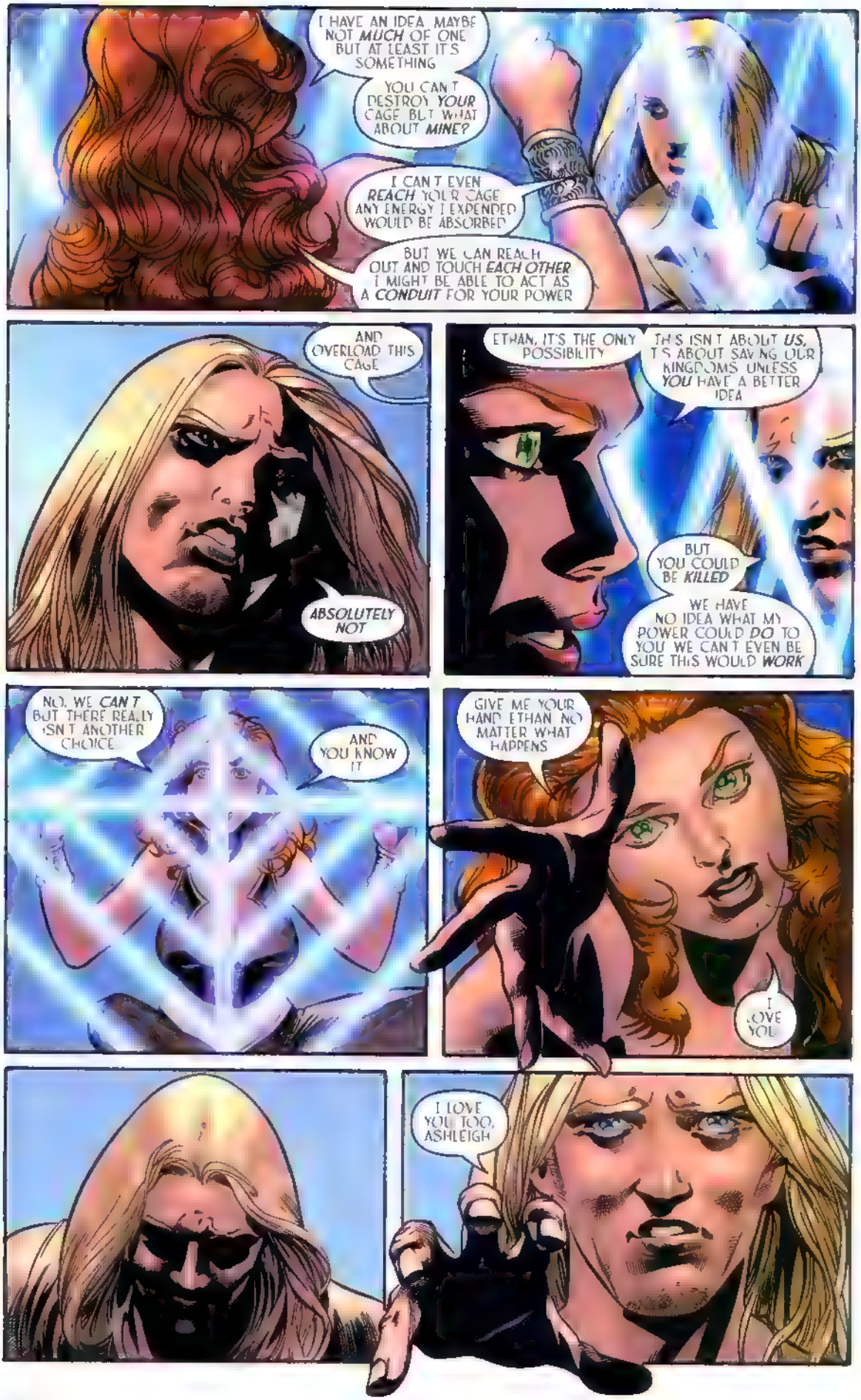
YOU CAN'T BLAME YOURSELF, ETHAN HOW COULD YOU HAVE KNOWN?
WHAT'S DONE IS DONE THERE'S NO SENSE DWELLING ON THE PAST LET'S CONCENTRATE ON FINDING A WAY OUT OF HERE

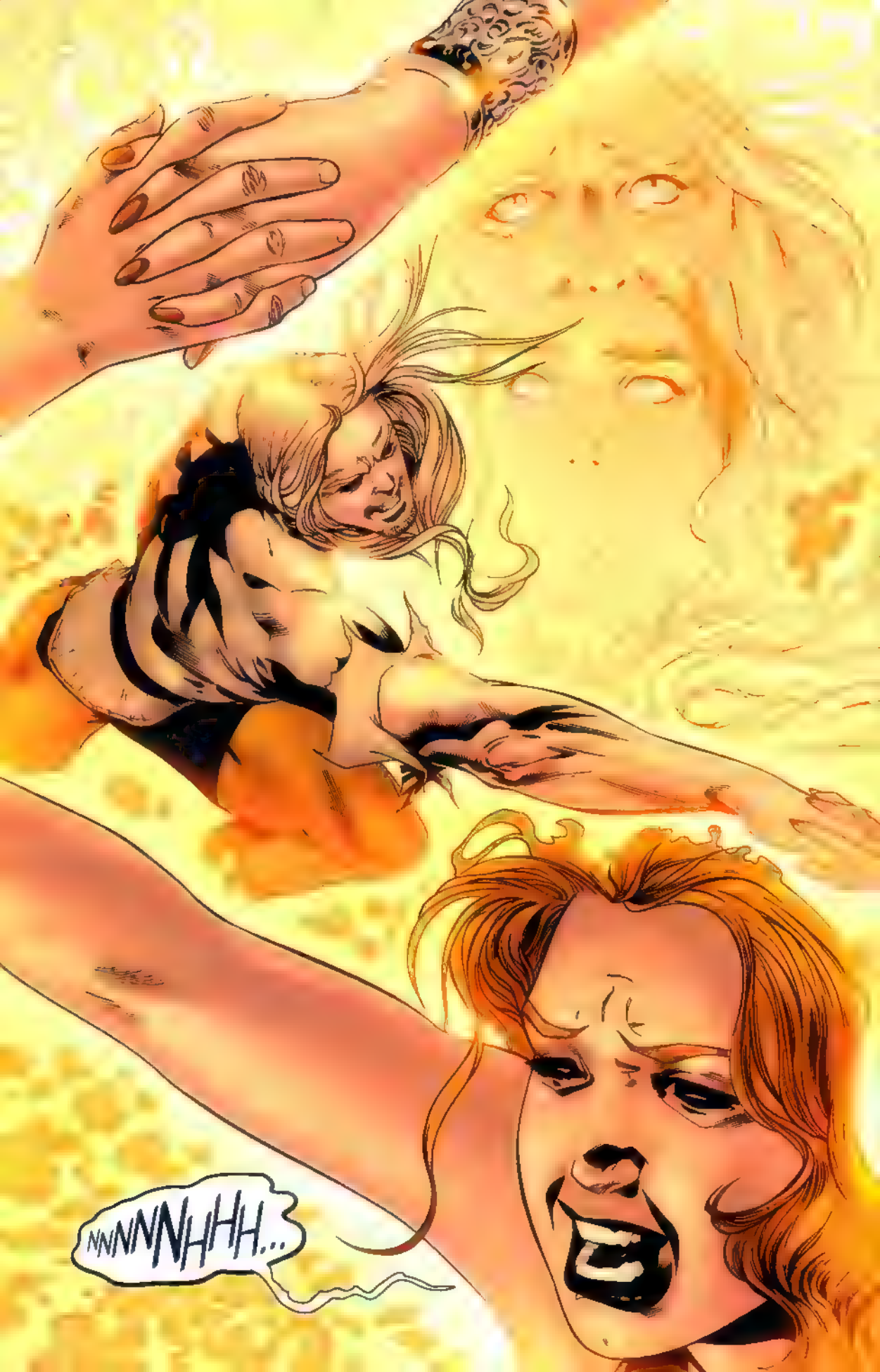

WHAT IF WE DON'T?
ETHAN, DON'T TALK LIKE THAT
BUT WHAT IF WE DON'T?


ASHLEIGH. EVER SINCE WE MET WE'VE HARDLY HAD TIME TO CATCH OUR BREATH. I KNOW THIS WASN'T EXACTLY BEEN A *PROPER* COURTSHIP
SO JUST IN CASE ANYTHING HAPPENS THERE'S SOMETHING I WANT TO SAY
SOMETHING I WANT YOU TO HEAR
I LOVE YOU
WHEN I FREED YOU FROM THE RAVEN DUNGEONS, YOU WERE JUST GOING TO BE A MEANS TO AN *END* FOR ME
MY ONLY INTEREST IN YOU WAS WHAT YOU COULD DO FOR THE UNDERGROUND
SEEMS LIKE SUCH A LONG TIME AGO DOESN'T IT?
I LOVE YOU TOO, ETHAN
NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS
WE HAVE EACH OTHER


HOW TOUCHING
I'M PLEASED TO SEE YOU'RE NOT APPRECIABLY WORSE FOR YOUR INCARCERATION
AND WE'LL SEE IF I CAN INFLICT SOMETHING MORE *PERMANENT*
YOUR EFFORT WOULD BE USELESS AS I'M SURE YOU'VE ALREADY DISCOVERED.
YOUR CELL RESPONDS TO ANY POWER SURGE WITH AN APPROPRIATE DAMPENING FIELD
I'D WONDER HOW YOU COULD BETRAY US SO *EASILY*
BUT I HAVE TO REMIND MYSELF YOU'RE NOT *HUMAN*
TRUE. I AM A SYNTHETIC BEING
IT SEEMS YOU'RE CONSIDERABLY *BETTER* THAN THE LAST TIME WE SAW YOU NADIA
ARM REPAIRED AND FACE AS GOOD AS NEW
I REGRET OUR SITUATION HAS BECOME HOSTILE, ETHAN
BUT THE DAMAGE YOU INFLICTED UPON ME WAS EASILY MENDED
WHY DON'T YOU STEP A LITTLE CLOSER
BUT MY INTENTION WAS NOT BETRAYAL. IT APPEARED TO US YOUR BELIEFS WERE MUCH THE SAME AS THOSE WE OF TIGRIS HOLD DEAR
WE SOUGHT TO MAKE YOU *PART* OF WHAT WE WILL ACCOMPLISH
THE KHANATE MHINDA HAS ASKED ME TO AGAIN EXTEND OUR OFFER TO YOU.
JOIN US IN SUBJUGATING THE RAVEN AND HERON KINGDOMS AS WE SPREAD OUR VISION TO THE REST OF AVALON

MY ANSWER IS THE SAME NOW AS BEFORE
NO
YOU'RE WASTING YOUR BREATH ASKING ME
ASSUMING YOU EVEN BREATHE
UNFORTUNATE
USING YOUR SANCTUARY ISLAND AS A STAGING AREA WOULD HAVE BEEN A GREAT BOON TO OUR INVASION.
NOW WE WILL HAVE TO TAKE IT, AND EXPEND RESOURCES TO DO SO
WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH US?
YOU WILL SIMPLY REMAIN IMPRISONED. WE OF TIGRIS ARE NOT BARBARIANS, AFTER ALL.
ONE DAY PERHAPS YOU WILL COME TO YOUR SENSES AND JOIN THE ENLIGHTENED REGIME WE ARE BRINGING TO AVALON
FAREWELL
SO WHAT NOW?


I HAVE AN IDEA. MAYBE NOT *MUCH* OF ONE BUT AT LEAST IT'S SOMETHING
YOU CAN'T DESTROY *YOUR* CAGE. BUT WHAT ABOUT *MINE*?
I CAN'T EVEN *REACH* YOUR CAGE. ANY ENERGY I EXPENDED WOULD BE ABSORBED
BUT WE CAN REACH OUT AND TOUCH *EACH OTHER*. I MIGHT BE ABLE TO ACT AS A *CONDUIT* FOR YOUR POWER
AND OVERLOAD THIS CAGE
ABSOLUTELY NOT
ETHAN, IT'S THE ONLY POSSIBILITY
THIS ISN'T ABOUT *US*, IT'S ABOUT SAVING OUR KINGDOMS UNLESS *YOU* HAVE A BETTER IDEA
BUT YOU COULD BE *KILLED*
WE HAVE NO IDEA WHAT MY POWER COULD *DO* TO YOU. WE CAN'T EVEN BE SURE THIS WOULD *WORK*
NO. WE *CAN'T*. BUT THERE REALLY ISN'T ANOTHER CHOICE
AND YOU KNOW IT
GIVE ME YOUR HAND, ETHAN. NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS
I LOVE YOU
I LOVE YOU TOO, ASHLEIGH


NNNNNHHH...

AAAAGH!

ASH. EIGH?
ASHLEIGH?
MMM
M A.L RIGHT
JJST
JJST GIVE ME A MINUTE
I'L FIGURE OUT HOW TO GET YOU OUT OF THERE
TEN TEN TEN
HEE

EASY
HOW DO YOU FEEL? CAN YOU *STAND?*
A LITTLE WOOZY, BUT I'LL LIVE
NOT THE KIND OF EXPERIENCE I'D LIKE TO REPEAT

I DON'T *EVER* WANT TO COME THAT CLOSE TO LOSING YOU
WE'D BETTER GET MOVING
OVERLOADING YOUR CELL LIKE THAT

IS PROBABLY GOING TO ATTRACT SOME ATTENTION
HOW TRUE
SENTRIES, PREVENT THEIR ESCAPE
BY ANY MEANS NECESSARY

YOU NO LONGER HAVE *SURPRISE* ON YOUR SIDE, NADIA
WHETHER YOU AND YOUR AUTOMATONS ARE STANDING IN OUR WAY OR NOT

WE'RE LEAVING
PRISONER
EXTINGUISH YOUR WEAPON AND SURRENDER OR THE WOMAN WILL SUFFER THE CONSEQUENCES
ETHAN, DON'T

SURRENDER
DON'T GIVE IN, ETHAN
GO
THE KINGDOMS HAVE TO BE WARNED
YOU DIDN'T THINK I WAS ACTUALLY GOING TO LEAVE YOU BEHIND, DID YOU?
I'M AFRAID YOU *WON'T* BE LEAVING

FLEE, ASHLEIGH
I BEAR YOU NO ANIMOSITY SUCH A THING IS NOT PART OF MY MOTIVATIONAL PARAMETERS
BUT MY DISCRETIONARY PROGRAMMING PERMITS THE USE OF LETHAL FORCE I WILL *DO SO* IF YOU PERSIST IN THIS
ESCAPE IS IMPOSSIBLE
THE ENTIRE CITY WILL BE LOOKING FOR YOU
FINDING US
AND *TAKING* US
ARE TWO VASTLY DIFFERENT THINGS!

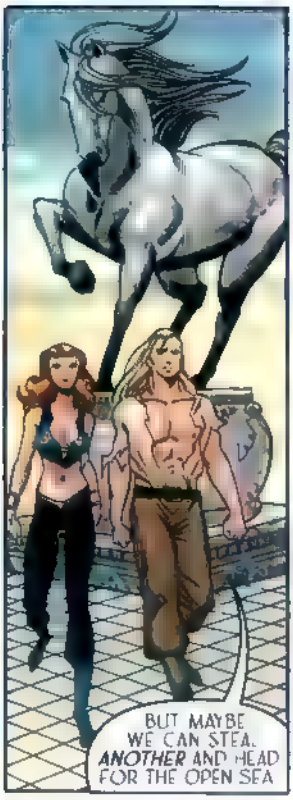
GHHN!
DO YOU REMEMBER THIS ETHAN?
I USED IT TO SAVE YOU ONCE
HNNG
YAAGH!
YOU COULD HAVE BEEN PART OF THE WORLD'S NEW ORDER
NGH
BUT NOW YOU WON'T BE PART OF THE WORLD AT ALL

THEN NEITHER WILL YOU.

ETHAN, ARE YOU
I'M FINE

JUST FINE

I EXPECT WE'LL HAVE MORE COMPANY SOON
ARE YOU UP TO TRAVELING?
DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME. I'LL KEEP UP
WELL, HEAD FOR THE WATERFRONT *OUR* SHIP WILL ALMOST CERTAINLY BE GUARDED


BUT MAYBE WE CAN STEAL *ANOTHER* AND HEAD FOR THE OPEN SEA

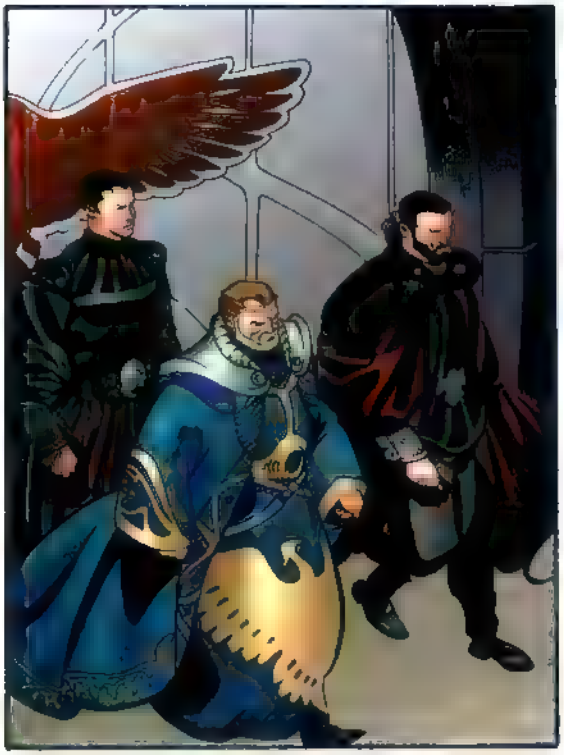
I FEEL LIKE WE NEED TO GET HOME

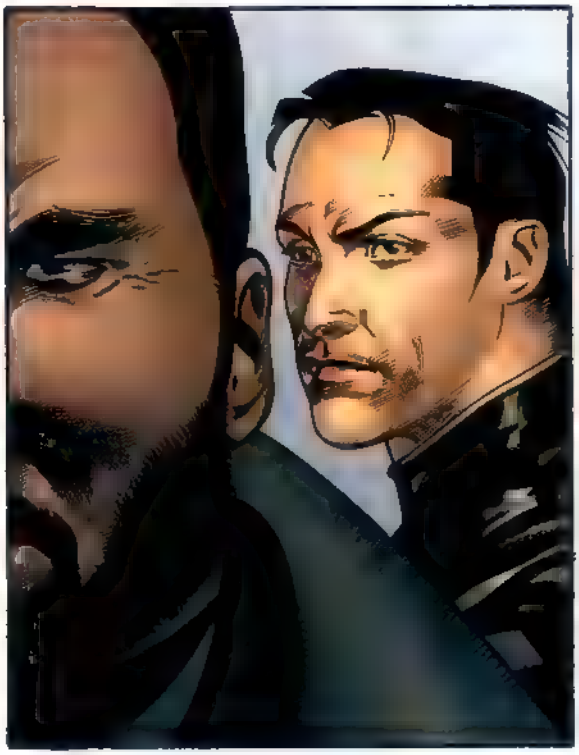
BEFORE SOMETHING TERRIBLE HAPPENS

THEY'VE BEEN SEQUESTERED IN THERE ALL DAY THE LONGER THIS TAKES

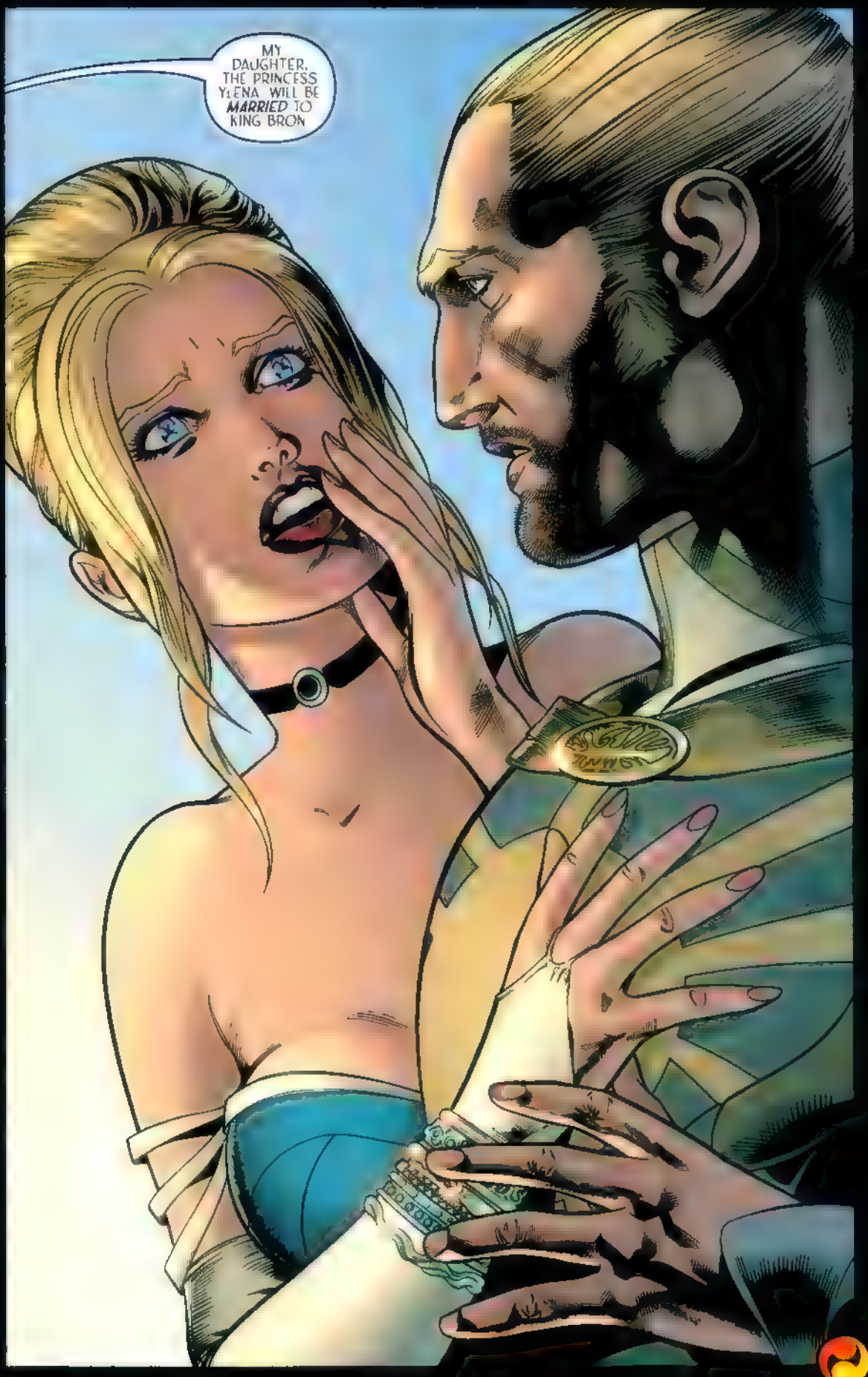
THE LESS I LIKE IT
I TOLD YOU BEFORE KAI, WE HAVE TO TRUST FATHER
WAIT

SOMETHING'S HAPPENING





THE RAVENS AND HERONS HAVE BEEN BITTER ENEMIES SINCE OUR KINGDOMS WERE *YOUNG*
WE WARRED FOR CENTURIES, AND SPILLED THE BLOOD OF GENERATIONS *FINALLY*, THERE CAME A PEACE
BUT THAT PEACE WAS *SHATTERED*, AND WE WENT BACK TO OUR KILLING WAYS
I WAS GONE FROM MY PEOPLE FOR A TIME BUT WHEN I RETURNED, I KNEW ALL THE OLD ANIMOSITIES MUST COME TO AN END
KING DANE AND I HAVE WORKED HARD TO FASHION WHAT WE BELIEVE WILL BE A *LASTING* PEACE
DANE?
AS BRON SAYS, FOR TOO LONG WE HAVE INFLICTED GRIEVOUS WOUNDS UPON ONE ANOTHER
BOTH SIDES HAVE SUFFERED MIGHTILY BUT NOW WE MUST MOVE ON
AND *FORGIVE* THE WRONGS OF THE PAST
THERE MUST BE NO MORE HATRED NO MORE BLOODSHED LET THAT BE THE WAY OF WHAT *WAS*, NOT WHAT *WILL* BE
WE MUST LOOK TO A FUTURE WHERE THE RAVENS AND HERONS WILL BE *ALLIES* RATHER THAN ENEMIES *BROTHERS* RATHER THAN COMBATANTS
JUST AS WE SHED BLOOD IN WAR, THIS PEACE WILL BE *CEMENTED* IN BLOOD
FOR THE GREATER GOOD, IN ORDER TO *JOIN* OUR TWO GREAT DYNASTIES


MY DAUGHTER, THE PRINCESS YLENA, WILL BE MARRIED TO KING BRON

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Ethan and a small band of followers, including his sidekick Skink, the bounty hunter Exeter, and Nadia, a traveler from the far kingdom of Tigris, took control of an island and made it a Sanctuary for the Lesser Races. Ethan then used his power to end the war.

Bron returned to Raven lands and reclaimed the Obsidian Throne. Meanwhile, Ethan, Ashleigh and Nadia journeyed to Tigris in hopes of striking a treaty, but the true intentions of Tigris were laid bare — conquest of the Raven and Heron kingdoms. While Ethan and Ashleigh escaped from Tigris, Heron King Dane shockingly announced that his daughter, Ylena, would marry Bron in order to cement a lasting peace.

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YOU'RE LESS THAN YOUR BROTHERS, BOY!

VANG

NNGH!
VANG

AAGH!

FIRST BLOOD TO BRON.
THE CONTEST IS HIS.

VICTORY TO THE RAVEN DYNASTY.
BRON
CONGRATULATIONS
THE BETTER MAN WON
BRON?
CHUK

HWUH!

MAI SHEN

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

I THOUGHT YOU'D BE A BIT MORE PLEASED TO *SEE* ME, BRON IT'S BEEN SUCH A LONG TIME

DON'T YOU HAVE SOMEWHERE *ELSE* TO BE?

I WON'T BE MISSED

AND EVEN IF I *WAS*, WHAT DOES IT MATTER NOW? YOU'VE ALREADY ACCOMPLISHED YOUR GOAL

SOON YOU WILL *MARRY* THE HERON PRINCESS

OUR PLANS HAVE BORNE EXACTLY THE FRUIT WE INTENDED

ONCE THE RAVEN AND HERON KINGDOMS ARE UNITED THROUGH THIS MARRIAGE YOU CAN BEGIN TO EXERT YOUR INFLUENCE ON THE WEST

WHAT YOU COULD NOT TAKE BY *FORCE* WILL ONE DAY BE YOURS BY *ALLIANCE*

AND THEN WE CAN *TRULY* BEGIN TO BUILD OUR EMPIRE

IS *THAT* WHAT YOU WERE DREAMING ABOUT? THE FAIR LADY WHO WILL BE YOUR WIFE?

NO

I DREAMT OF HER BROTHER HOW EVERYTHING WOULD BE DIFFERENT HAD I SIMPLY *SLAIN* HIM IN THAT ARENA

PATIENCE

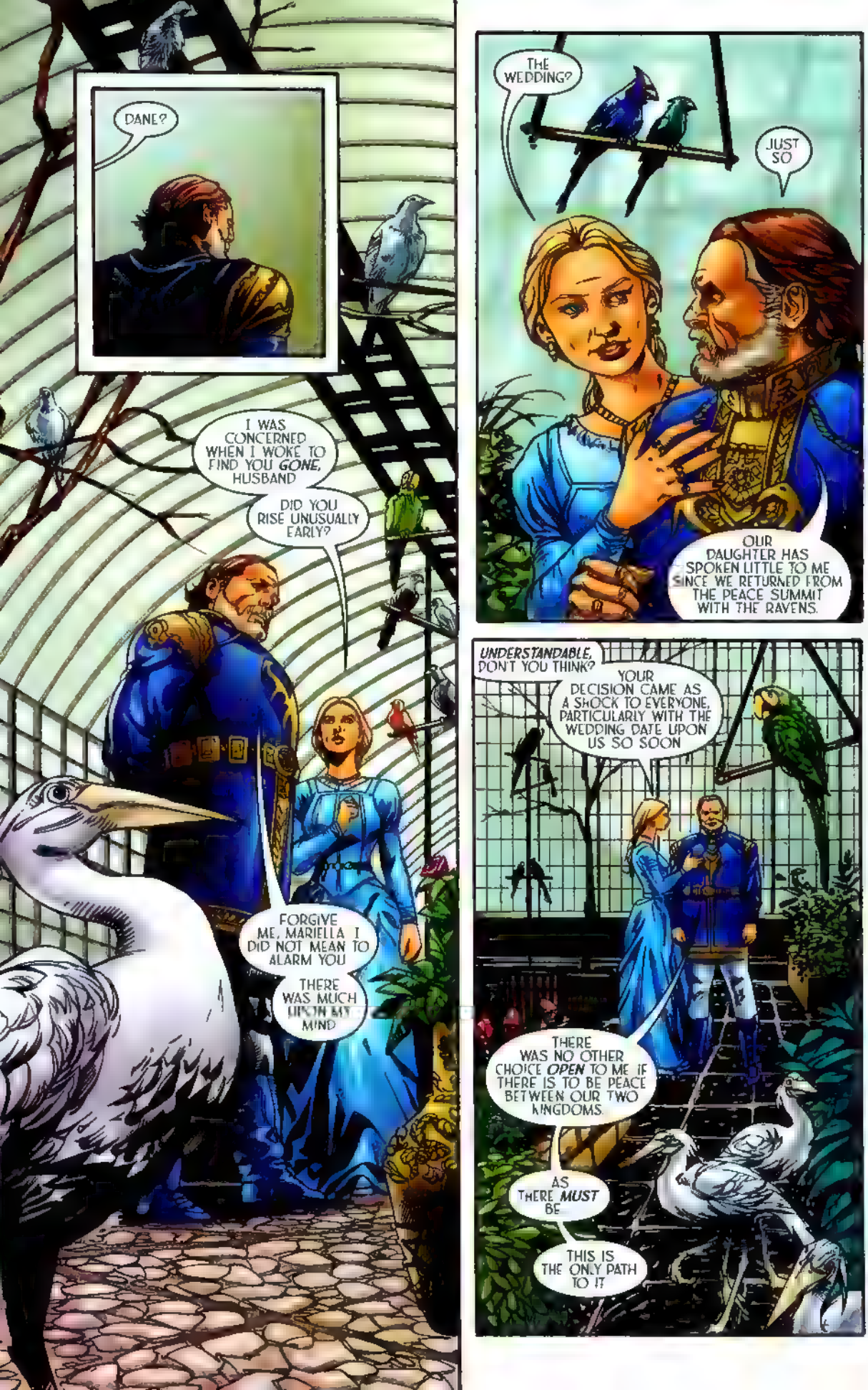
YOU WILL HAVE AMPLE OPPORTUNITY TO EXACT YOUR REVENGE AGAINST ETHAN ETHAN *AND* YOUR TURNCOAT SISTER

OH, I FULLY INTEND TO DO SO

Shhh

AND YOU *WILL* BUT PUT THEM FROM YOUR MIND NOW I MUST RETURN BY THE MORNING

BUT THAT'S *HOURS* AWAY


DANE?
I WAS CONCERNED WHEN I WOKE TO FIND YOU *GONE*, HUSBAND
DID YOU RISE UNUSUALLY EARLY?
FORGIVE ME, MARIELLA I DID NOT MEAN TO ALARM YOU
THERE WAS MUCH UPON MY MIND
THE WEDDING?
JUST SO
OUR DAUGHTER HAS SPOKEN LITTLE TO ME SINCE WE RETURNED FROM THE PEACE SUMMIT WITH THE RAVENS.
UNDERSTANDABLE, DON'T YOU THINK?
YOUR DECISION CAME AS A SHOCK TO EVERYONE, PARTICULARLY WITH THE WEDDING DATE UPON US SO SOON
THERE WAS NO OTHER CHOICE *OPEN* TO ME IF THERE IS TO BE PEACE BETWEEN OUR TWO KINGDOMS.
AS THERE *MUST* BE
THIS IS THE ONLY PATH TO IT

AL. TRUE
YOU ARE MY HUSBAND AND MY KING. AND I SUPPORT YOU, BUT IT IS A GREAT DEAL YOU ASK OF YLENA
IF THERE WERE ANY *OTHER* CHOICE I WOULD GLADLY ACCEPT IT
IS IT THAT YOU TRY TO TELL ME SOMETHING OF THE STATE OF YLENA'S MIND, MARIELLA?
IT WOULD BE MOST UNFORTUNATE IF SOMETHING WERE TO PREVENT THE MARRIAGE
WHAT IS IT YOU ASK? WHETHER YLENA WOULD *FLEE* IN ORDER TO AVOID THE FATE THAT AWAITS HER?
SUCH A NOTION MIGHT OCCUR TO HER HER FUTURE, FROM HER POINT OF VIEW, IS NOT AN ATTRACTIVE ONE
NO.
MARRYING HER BROTHER'S MURDERER AND *ALL* THAT IT ENTAILS
LIVING IN A LAND APART FROM HER FAMILY
NO, IT'S NOT AN *ATTRACTIVE* FUTURE AT ALL
BUT YLENA KNOWS WHAT'S REQUIRED OF HER IF YOU BELIEVE SHE WOULD SHIRK HER DUTY
PERHAPS YOU DON'T KNOW YOUR DAUGHTER AS WE... AS YOU SHOULD
I HAVE SENT WORD TO ETHAN ON THE SANCTUARY ISLE, INFORMING HIM OF THE WEDDING

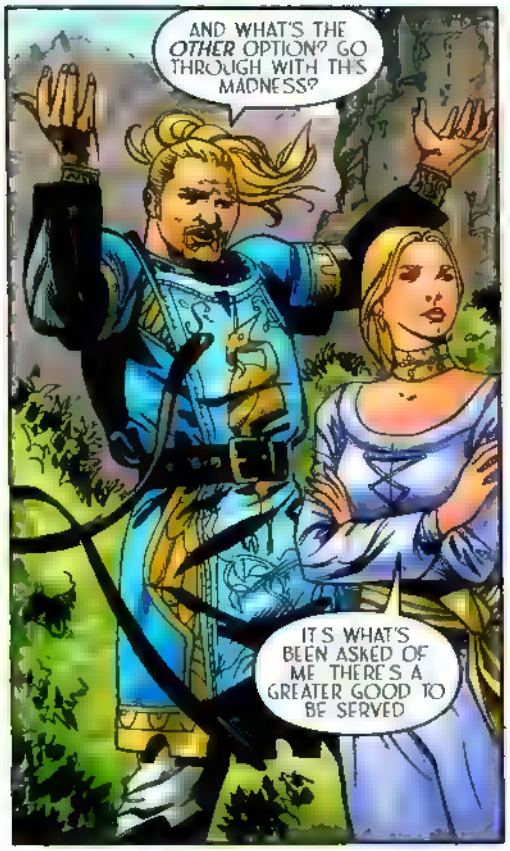
YOU TOLD ETHAN?
YES, ETHAN. YOU DO REMEMBER YOUR YOUNGEST SON, DON'T YOU?
I REALIZE YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM IS SOMEWHAT STRAINED NOW, BUT IT'S ONLY RIGHT THAT ETHAN BE AWARE OF WHAT TRANSPIRES
YES
YES, OF COURSE. YOU DID RIGHT TO INFORM HIM. HE'LL WANT TO BE THERE
I MUST REPAIR MY RELATIONSHIPS WITH ALL MY CHILDREN.
IT IS IMPORTANT FOR THEM TO BELIEVE IN ME
YOU HAVE, IN RECENT TIMES, BEEN A STRANGER TO THEM, DANE
AND THAT DISTANCE WILL ONLY GROW UNLESS YOU FIND A WAY TO BRIDGE IT
REMEMBER THAT
YOU'RE A GOOD MAN, MY HUSBAND
I TRY TO BE
THEY ARE GROWN NOW, AND WE ARE JUSTIFIABLY PROUD OF THE ADULTS THEY HAVE BECOME
BUT YOU ONCE HELD EACH OF THEM IN YOUR ARMS.
THEY ARE THE SAME CHILDREN WHO PLAYED AT YOUR KNEE.

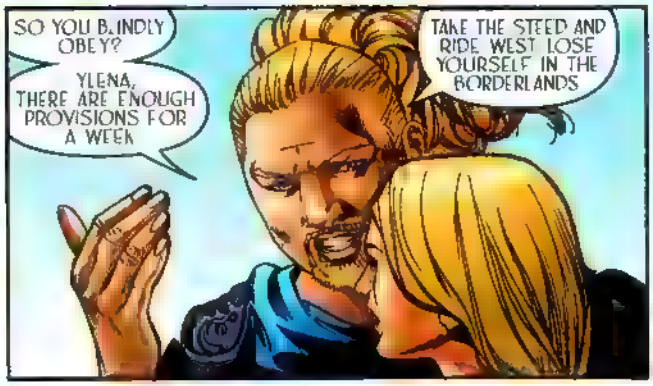
CAW CAW CAW
WHAT
UP THERE
CAW CAW
A RAVEN
BUT HOW WOULD SUCH A THING GET INTO OUR AVIARY?
I DON'T KNOW
CURIOUS, ISN'T IT? PERHAPS IT'S A GOOD OMEN FOR YLENA
I DON'T SEE HOW IT COULD BE. IT'S YLENA WHO WILL BE A HERON AMONG RAVENS
AND THERE IS NO RAVEN HERE AMONG US

YLENA?
YLENA

YOU'RE NOT CONTEMPLATING ANYTHING RASH
OUT HERE, ARE YOU, SISTER?
Oh, DON'T BE RIDICULOUS, KAI
I'M NOT ABOUT TO THROW MYSELF OFF A CLIFF, BEING FORCED TO MARRY BRON NOTWITHSTANDING
I WAS SIMPLY THINKING
IS THERE ANY REASON YOU BROUGHT A MOUNT WITH YOU?
I WAS OUT FOR A RIDE THAT'S ALL
FULLY LADEN WITH SUPPLIES?
IT MUST HAVE BEEN A LONG RIDE
TAKE IT

YLENA TAKE IT
THAT'S REALLY WHAT YOU EXPECT ME TO DO, KAI?
RUN AWAY?

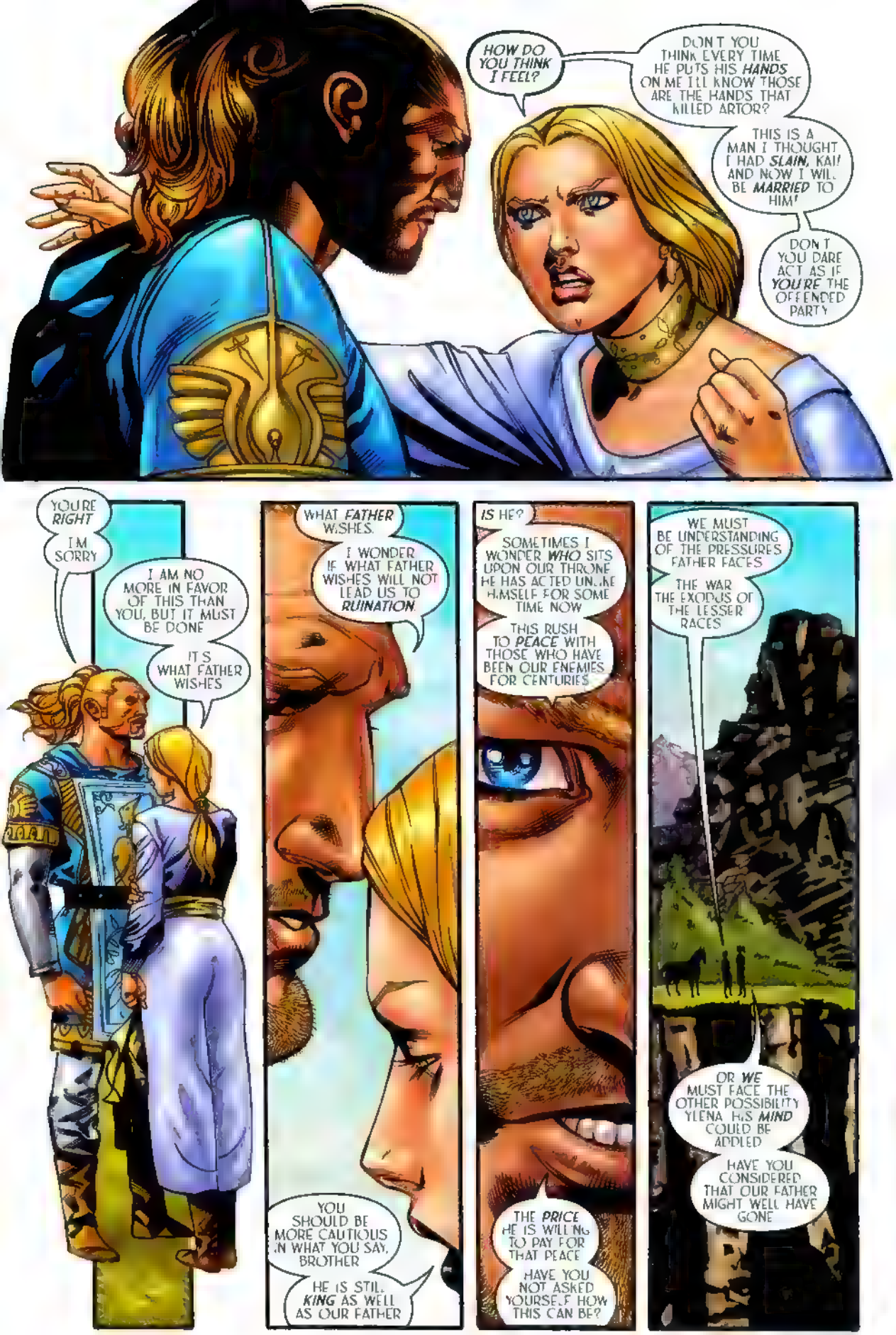

AND WHAT'S THE *OTHER* OPTION? GO THROUGH WITH THIS MADNESS?
IT'S WHAT'S BEEN ASKED OF ME. THERE'S A GREATER GOOD TO BE SERVED


SO YOU BLINDLY OBEY?
YLENA, THERE ARE ENOUGH PROVISIONS FOR A WEEK
TAKE THE STEED AND RIDE WEST. LOSE YOURSELF IN THE BORDERLANDS

I CAN'T THINK OF A *WORSE* FATE THAN THE ONE AWAITING YOU
THEN WE AGREE ON SOMETHING. NEITHER CAN I
BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN I CAN REFUSE IT

HOW CAN YOU JUST ACCEPT THIS?
HOW CAN *YOU* OF ALL PEOPLE SAY THAT, KAI?
AREN'T YOU THE ONE WHO CAME TO *BLOWS* WITH ETHAN BECAUSE YOU FELT HE TURNED HIS BACK ON THE FAMILY?
WOULDN'T I BE DOING THE SAME THING BY TAKING YOU UP ON THIS?

ETHAN DID SO BY *CHOICE*. THIS *IS* SOMETHING *OTHER*.
JUST THE *THOUGHT* OF MY SISTER WITH BRON IS ENOUGH TO—

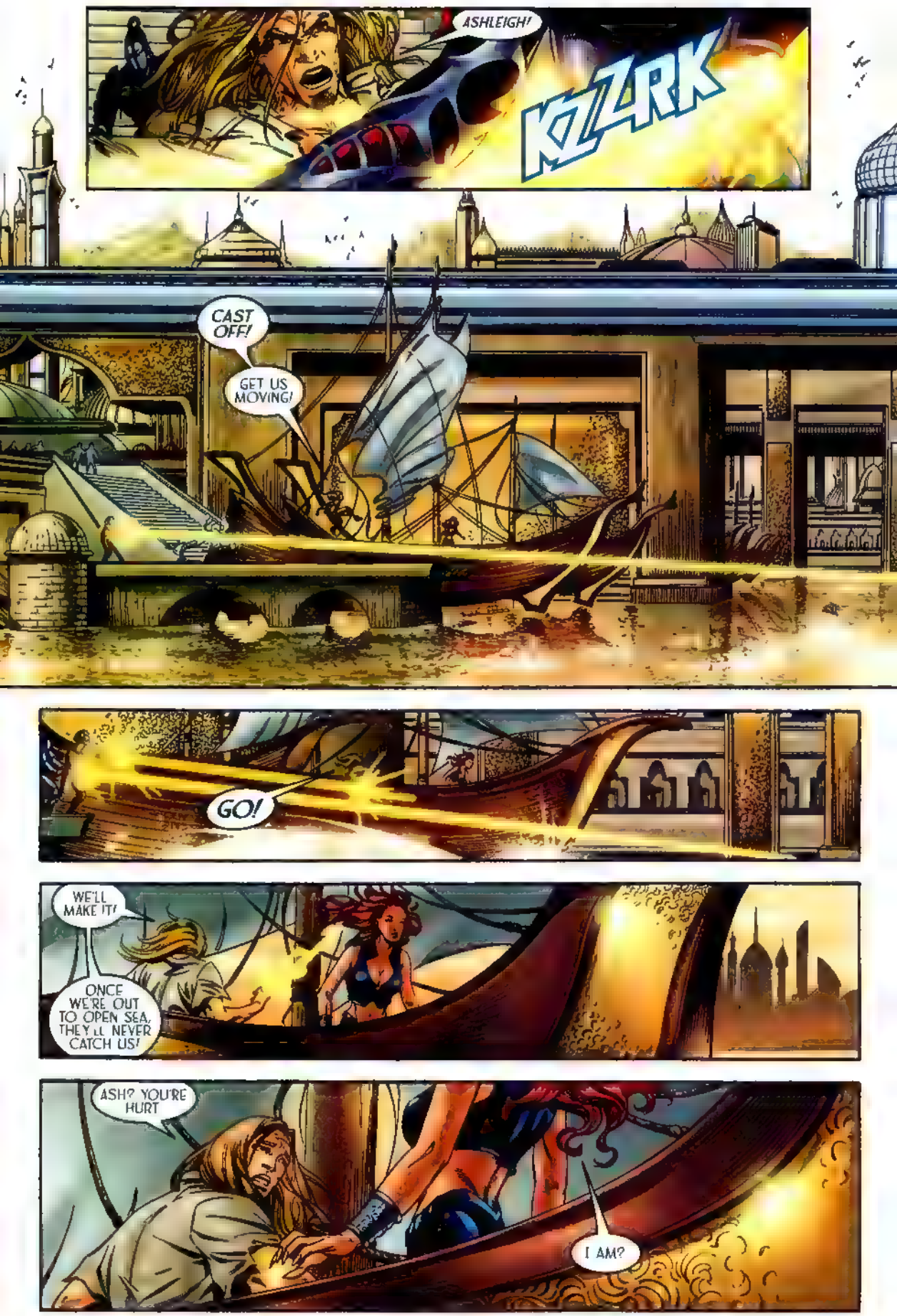

HOW DO YOU THINK I FEEL?
DON'T YOU THINK EVERY TIME HE PUTS HIS HANDS ON ME I'LL KNOW THOSE ARE THE HANDS THAT KILLED ARTOR?
THIS IS A MAN I THOUGHT I HAD SLAIN, KAI! AND NOW I WILL BE MARRIED TO HIM!
DON'T YOU DARE ACT AS IF YOU'RE THE OFFENDED PARTY
YOU'RE RIGHT
I'M SORRY
I AM NO MORE IN FAVOR OF THIS THAN YOU, BUT IT MUST BE DONE
IT'S WHAT FATHER WISHES
WHAT FATHER WISHES.
I WONDER IF WHAT FATHER WISHES WILL NOT LEAD US TO RUINATION.
YOU SHOULD BE MORE CAUTIOUS IN WHAT YOU SAY, BROTHER
HE IS STILL KING AS WELL AS OUR FATHER
IS HE?
SOMETIMES I WONDER WHO SITS UPON OUR THRONE HE HAS ACTED UNLIKE HIMSELF FOR SOME TIME NOW
THIS RUSH TO PEACE WITH THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN OUR ENEMIES FOR CENTURIES
THE PRICE HE IS WILLING TO PAY FOR THAT PEACE
HAVE YOU NOT ASKED YOURSELF HOW THIS CAN BE?
WE MUST BE UNDERSTANDING OF THE PRESSURES FATHER FACES
THE WAR
THE EXODUS OF THE LESSER RACES
OR WE MUST FACE THE OTHER POSSIBILITY YLENA HIS MIND COULD BE ADDLED
HAVE YOU CONSIDERED THAT OUR FATHER MIGHT WELL HAVE GONE

MAD
FATHER WE
WE D.DN T HEAR YOU APPROACH
DON T LET ME INTERRUPT
SEEMS YOU WERE HAVING A VERY INTRIGUING DISCUSSION
SOMETHING YOU WISH TO SAY, KAI?

WHY? ARE YOU ACTUALLY WILLING TO LISTEN THIS TIME?
I GROW WEARY OF YOUR UNCEASING COMPLAINTS
AND I GROW WEARY OF YOUR EFFORTS TO HAND OUR KINGDOM TO THE RAVENS!
KAI I'LL DO WHAT I
NO, THIS NEEDS TO BE SAID
THIS PEACE YOU PURSUE IS DISTASTEFUL ENOUGH, BUT SELLING YOUR DAUGHTER TO THOSE MONSTERS TO SEAL IT IS THE HEIGHT OF INSANITY!
YOUR ACTIONS DISGRACE ARTOR'S MEMORY
YOU DISGRACE OUR ENTIRE DYNASTY!
THIS DISOBEDIENCE IS MY REWARD FOR BEING TOO LENIENT UPON YOU.
YOU'VE CERTAINLY GIVEN ME MUCH TO PONDER, KAI

GNFF!
I AM STILL YOUR FATHER
ARE YOU?
THE DECISION IS MADE
DO NOT TEMPT ME AGAIN
OR THE CONSEQUENCES WILL BE MORE SERIOUS NEXT TIME
FAR MORE SERIOUS

I REGRET THE SACRIFICE YOU MUST MAKE, DAUGHTER
BUT THERE IS NO OTHER WAY FOR ME TO ACCOMPLISH WHAT MUST BE DONE
I KNOW WHAT MY DUTY IS, FATHER
GOOD
PERHAPS YOU CAN TEACH YOUR BROTHER TO KNOW *HIS* BEFORE HIS IGNORANCE DOES HIM GREAT HARM
WELL?
DO YOU THINK THOSE ARE THE ACTIONS OF THE FATHER WE KNEW?
THERE IS SOMETHING AT *WORK* HERE, XENA. I'M SURE OF IT
I
DON'T KNOW WHAT TO THINK, KA.
BUT I KNOW IT'S TOO LATE TO *CHANGE* ANYTHING


ASHLEIGH!
KZZRK
CAST OFF!
GET US MOVING!
GO!
WE'LL MAKE IT!
ONCE WE'RE OUT TO OPEN SEA, THEY'LL NEVER CATCH US!
ASH? YOU'RE HURT
I AM?

I AM
THAT'S FUNNY
I NEVER FELT
A THING
DOES IT LOOK SERIOUS TO YOU?
NNNH

Hnn?
ETHAN?
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
FINE. I'M JUST
I WAS *DREAMING*, THAT'S ALL
TIGRIS IS OBVIOUSLY VERY MUCH ON MY MIND
NOT SURPRISING, NOW THAT WE KNOW THEY PLAN AN *INVASION*
I WAS COMING DOWN TO WAKE YOU ANYWAY
THE ISLAND'S IN SIGHT. WE'RE ALMOST HOME
A YEAR AGO, I COULDN'T HAVE *IMAGINED* HEARING THAT. OR THAT *YOU'D* BE SAYING IT TO ME

BUT THE SANCTUARY ISLE REALLY *IS* HOME NOW, ISN'T IT?
FIRST WE WARN THE KINGDOMS
THE RAVENS AND HERONS HAVE BEEN ENEMIES FOR SO LONG
I WONDER IF IT'S ACTUALLY *POSSIBLE* FOR THEM TO PUT ASIDE THEIR HATRED AND FACE TIGRIS TOGETHER
THEY WON'T HAVE ANY *CHOICE* IF THEY EXPECT TO SURVIVE
WELCOME BACK, ETHAN
EXETER
SKINK
IT'S GOOD TO SEE BOTH OF YOU, BUT YOU'RE NOT GOING TO LIKE THE *NEWS* WE BRING

I'M AFRAID YOU'RE NOT GOING TO LIKE THE NEWS YOU'RE *RETURNING* TO
IT CAN'T BE ANY WORSE THAN *THIS*. TIGRIS WASN'T AT ALL WHAT WE THOUGHT THEY'RE INTENDING TO—
ETHAN
BRON IS *ALIVE*
BRON IS ALIVE AND HE'S *MARRYING* YOUR SISTER TOMORROW

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Thus Far in Scion

What started with a mysterious sigil resulted in war. Prince Ethan of the West-ruling Heron Dynasty was graced with a mark granting him power, leading to the accidental scarring of Prince Bron of the East-ruling Raven Dynasty during ritual combat.

War between the kingdoms followed, but as the conflict raged, Ethan pledged his loyalty to the Underground movement dedicated to freeing the genetically engineered Lesser Races. His companion in this was Ashleigh, Raven princess and sister to Bron. Eventually the two gave in to their mutual attraction and became lovers.

Ethan and a small band of followers, including his sidekick, Skink, and the bounty hunter Exeter, took control of an island and made it a Sanctuary for the Lesser Races. Ethan then used his power to end the war.

While Bron returned to Raven lands and reclaimed the Obsidian Throne, Ethan and Ashleigh journeyed to the far kingdom of Tigris in hopes of striking a treaty. But the true intentions of Tigris were laid bare — conquest of the Raven and Heron kingdoms. As Ethan and Ashleigh escaped from Tigris, Heron King Dane shockingly announced his daughter, Ylena, would marry Bron to cement a lasting peace. Despite the protests of Prince Kai, Ylena agreed to the marriage.

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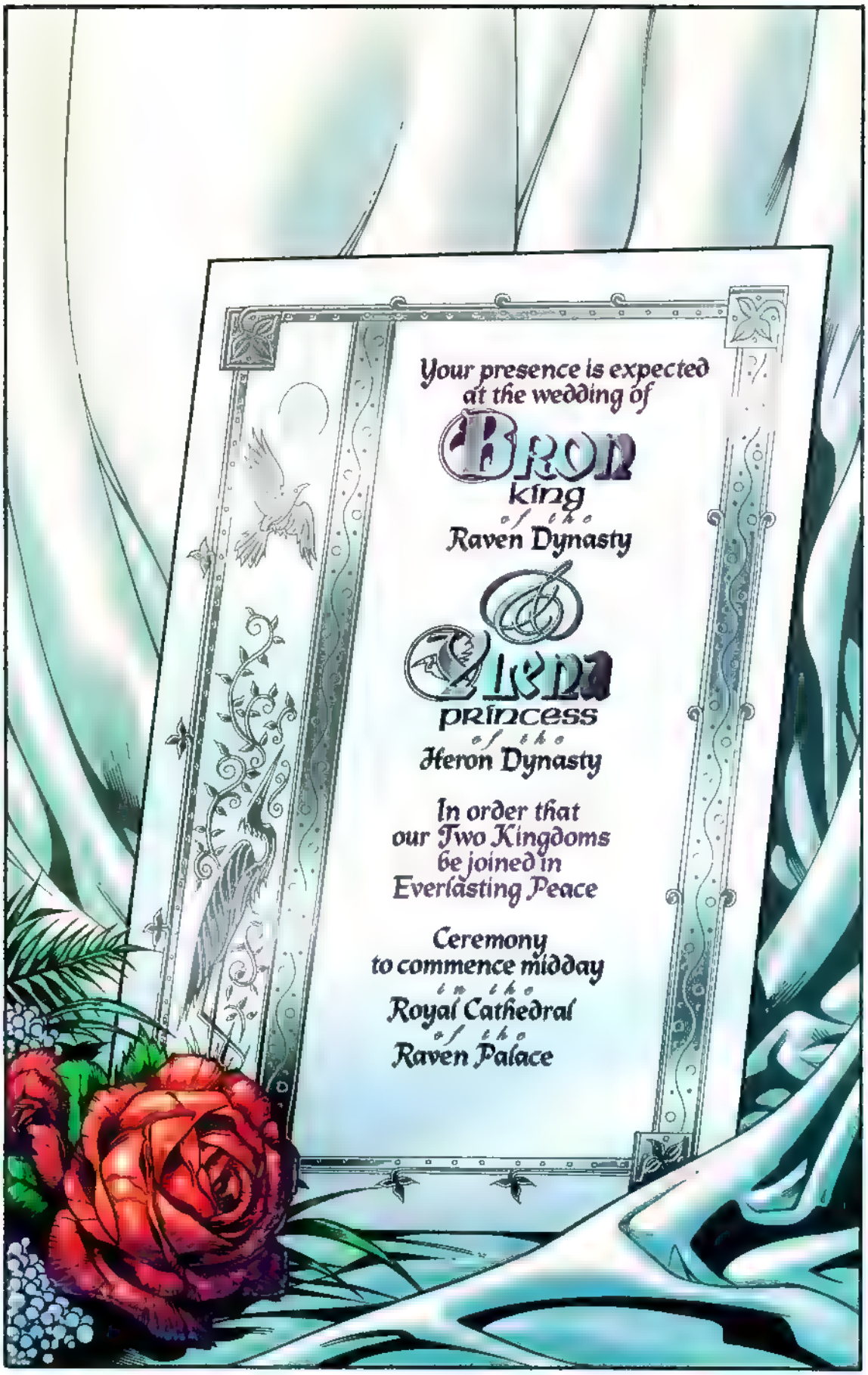

Your presence is expected
at the wedding of
BRON
king
of the
Raven Dynasty
&
ELENA
princess
of the
Heron Dynasty
In order that
our Two Kingdoms
be joined in
Everlasting Peace
Ceremony
to commence midday
in the
Royal Cathedral
of the
Raven Palace

WHAT?

BRON'S *MARRYING* MY SISTER?

TOMORROW?

THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE

BRON SHOULDN'T EVEN BE *ALIVE*

WORD OF BRON'S RETURN TO THE OBSIDIAN THRONE CAME SHORTLY AFTER YOU AND ASHLEIGH DEPARTED FOR TIGRIS.

THIS NEWS. THE *WEDDING*

IS MORE RECENT THE CEREMONY IS TO TAKE PLACE AT THE RAVEN PALACE

BUT THIS IS MADNESS

HOW CAN MY FATHER BE ALLOWING THE MAN WHO *MURDERED* MY BROTHER TO MARRY YSENA?

IT'S INTENDED TO ASSURE THE PEACE BETWEEN THE KINGDOMS

NO NO, THERE MUST BE MORE *TO IT* THAN THAT

WE NEED TO *UNDERSTAND* THIS BEFORE WE ACT, ETHAN

ASHLEIGH, BY THIS TIME TOMORROW YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE A *SISTER-IN-LAW* IF WE DON'T DO SOMETHING

IF WE LEAVE *NOW* WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO PUT A STOP TO THE CEREMONY

ARE YOU COMING?

I *CAN'T* THERE'S A BOUNTY ON MY HEAD IN RAVEN LANDS.

IF I SHOW MYSELF, I STAND A GOOD CHANCE OF NOT COMING BACK

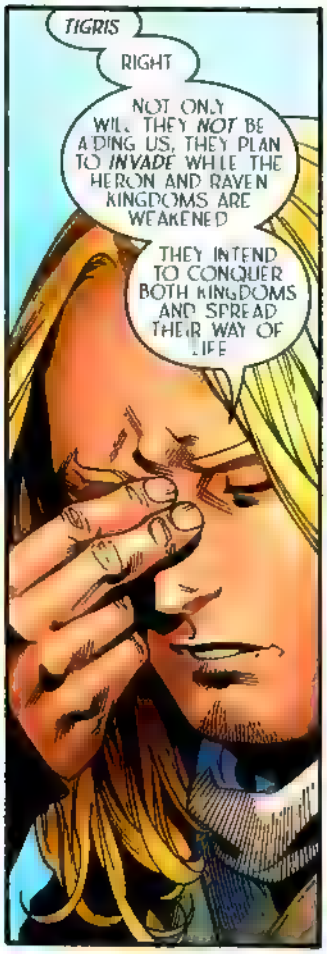
YOU'RE RIGHT YOU'D BETTER STAY HERE

I WON'T BE ANY MORE WELCOME THERE THAN YOU WOULD BE, BUT THEY'LL HAVE A LOT HARDER TIME *CAPTURING* ME

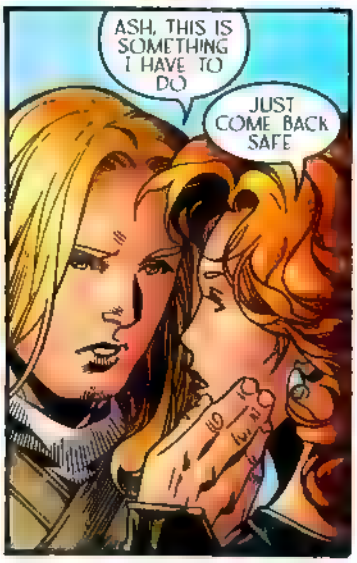
ETHAN, I WOULD LIKE TO ACCOMPANY YOU, IF YOU'LL HAVE ME

OF COURSE, SKINK

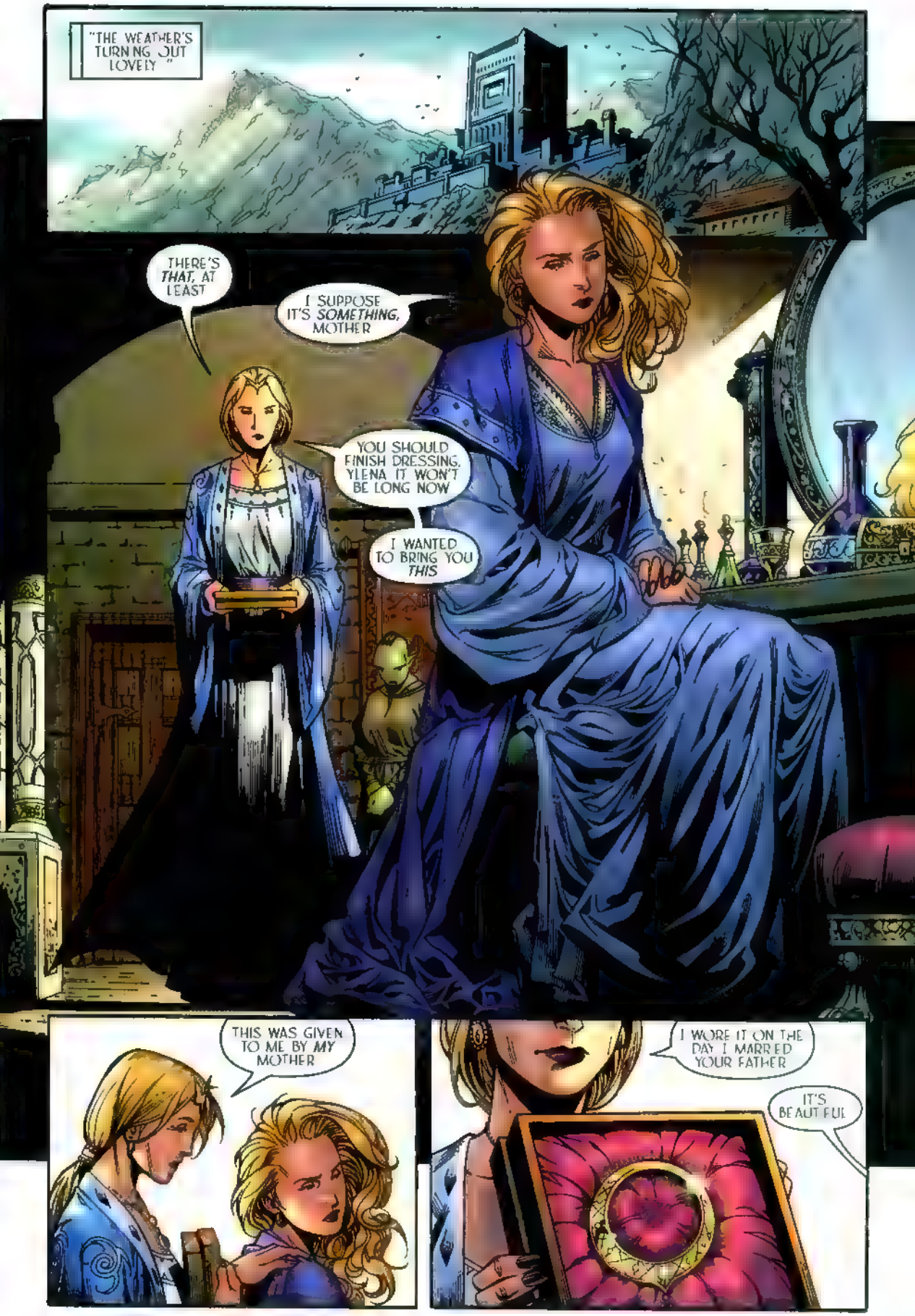
WHAT OF *TIGRIS*? WILL THEY SHARE THEIR TECHNOLOGY SO WE CAN BETTER DEFEND OURSELVES?

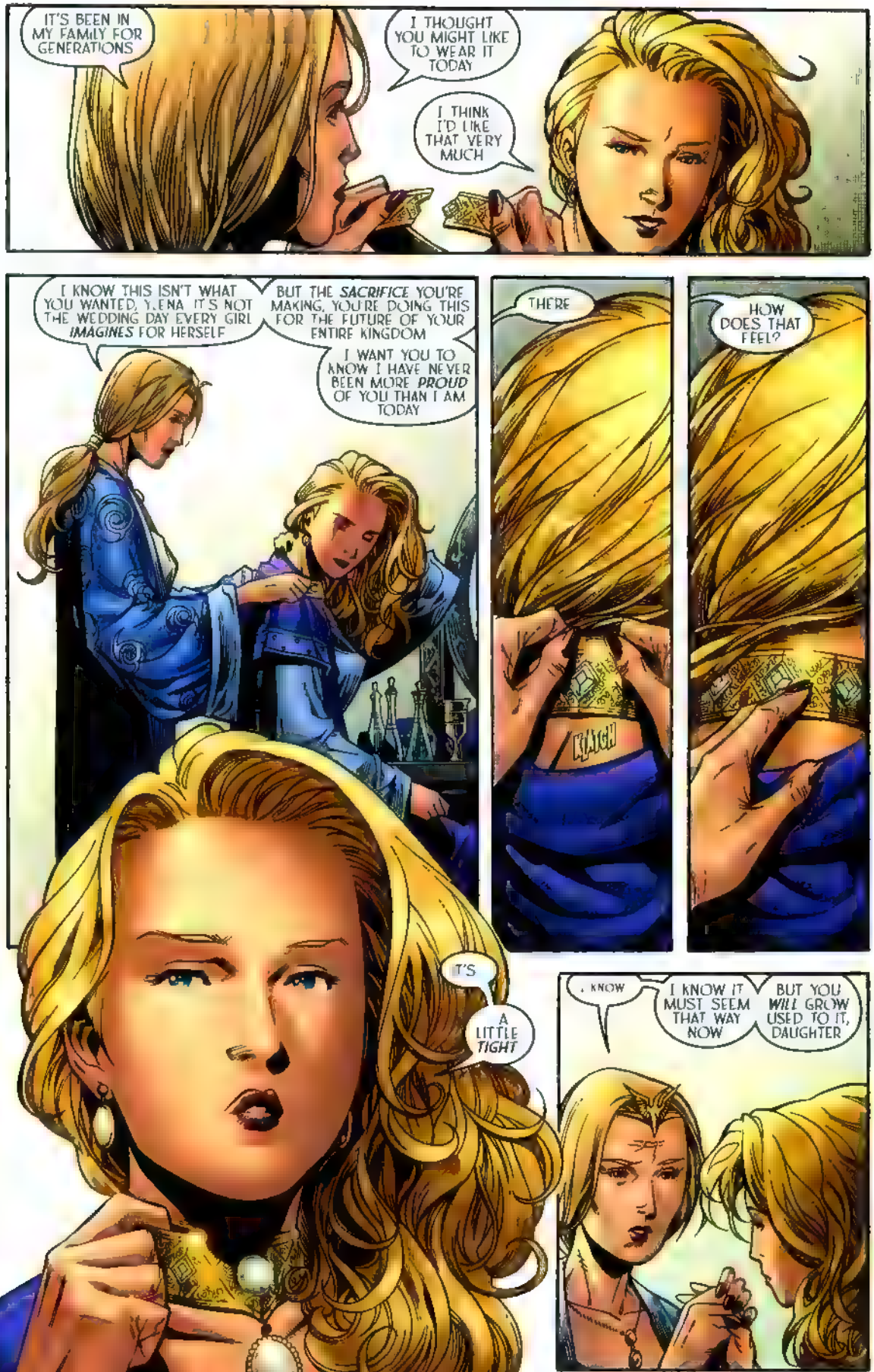

TIGRIS
RIGHT
NOT ONLY WILL THEY *NOT* BE AIDING US, THEY PLAN TO *INVADE* WHILE THE HERON AND RAVEN KINGDOMS ARE WEAKENED
THEY INTEND TO CONQUER BOTH KINGDOMS AND SPREAD THEIR WAY OF LIFE

BUT *ONE* DISASTER AT A TIME
EVERYTHING IS WELL *HERE*, EXETER?
WELL ENOUGH


ASH, THIS IS SOMETHING I HAVE TO DO
JUST COME BACK SAFE

LET'S GO, SKINA
LOOKS LIKE IT'S JUST YOU AND ME AGAIN


"THE WEATHER'S TURNING OUT LOVELY."
THERE'S *THAT*, AT LEAST
I SUPPOSE IT'S *SOMETHING*, MOTHER
YOU SHOULD FINISH DRESSING, YLENA. IT WON'T BE LONG NOW
I WANTED TO BRING YOU *THIS*
THIS WAS GIVEN TO ME BY *MY* MOTHER
I WORE IT ON THE DAY I MARRIED YOUR FATHER
IT'S BEAUTIFUL

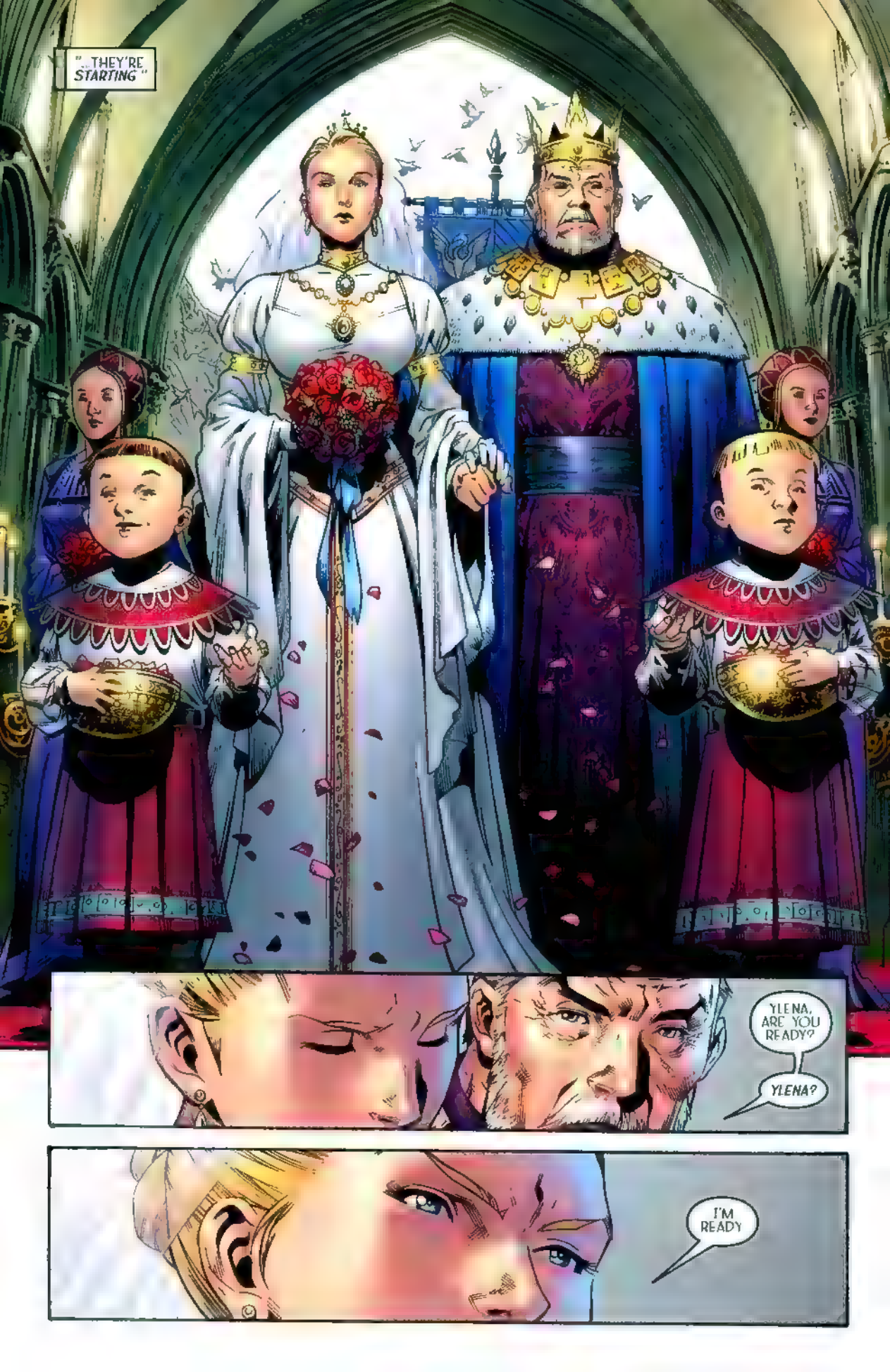

IT'S BEEN IN MY FAMILY FOR GENERATIONS
I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT LIKE TO WEAR IT TODAY
I THINK I'D LIKE THAT VERY MUCH
I KNOW THIS ISN'T WHAT YOU WANTED, XENA IT'S NOT THE WEDDING DAY EVERY GIRL *IMAGINES* FOR HERSELF
BUT THE *SACRIFICE* YOU'RE MAKING, YOU'RE DOING THIS FOR THE FUTURE OF YOUR ENTIRE KINGDOM
I WANT YOU TO KNOW I HAVE NEVER BEEN MORE *PROUD* OF YOU THAN I AM TODAY
THERE
HOW DOES THAT FEEL?
IT'S A LITTLE *TIGHT*
I KNOW
I KNOW IT MUST SEEM THAT WAY NOW
BUT YOU *WILL* GROW USED TO IT, DAUGHTER

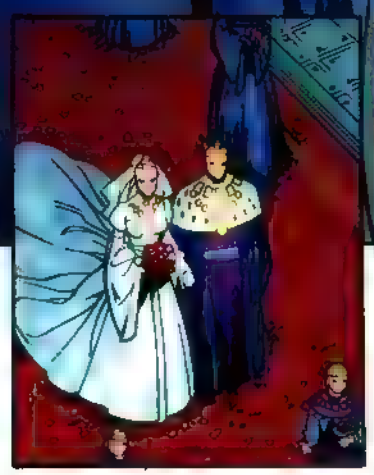
I SAID I WANTED THEM POLISHED
GHH!
AND YOU CAN'T EVEN DO THAT PROPERLY!
GET OUT!
YES, KING BRON!
I'M SORRY, SIRE!
I NEVER HAD THESE PROBLEMS W.TH NOR
THEN PERHAPS YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE KILLED HIM
HE SUFFERED THE FATE OF ALL THOSE WHO DO NOT SERVE ME LOYALLY, KORT
OBVIOUSLY
I MUST ADMIT BROTHER, I AM STILL UNSURE AS TO HOW YOU MANAGED TO PUT THIS WEDDING IN PLACE

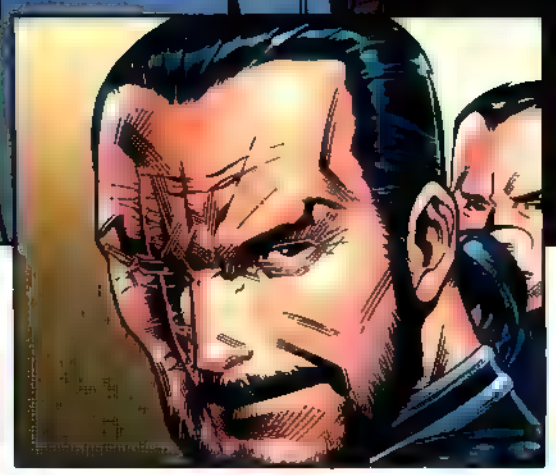
SIMPLY A MATTER OF DIPLOMACY BUT I WOULDN'T EXPECT YOU TO UNDERSTAND
IT'S WHAT A KING DOES
KING DANE SEEMS UNUSUALLY MALLEABLE
ESPECIALLY FOR SOMEONE WITH A WEAPON THE LIKES OF HIS YOUNGEST SON AT HIS COMMAND
ETHAN'S ALREADY DEFEATED YOU ONCE, AND VERY NEARLY KILLED YOU WHAT DO YOU INTEND TO DO ABOUT HIM?
DON'T TROUBLE YOURSELF, KORT I HAVE EVERY INTENTION OF DEALING WITH MY NEW BROTHER IN LAW
PERMANENTLY
AND THE SAME GOES FOR OUR SISTER
SAD THAT OUR FAMILY WON'T BE TOGETHER TO WITNESS THIS DAY
FATHER IN HIS TOMB, ASHLEIGH A FUGITIVE
BELIEVE ME WHEN I SAY I DAMN MYSELF EVERY DAY FOR NOT SEEING ASHLEIGH'S MURDEROUS INTENTIONS UNTIL IT WAS TOO LATE
BUT I'M SURE FATHER WILL BE WITH US IN SPIRIT
COME ALONG BROTHER MY BRIDE AWAITS
AND I'M ANXIOUS TO COLLECT HER

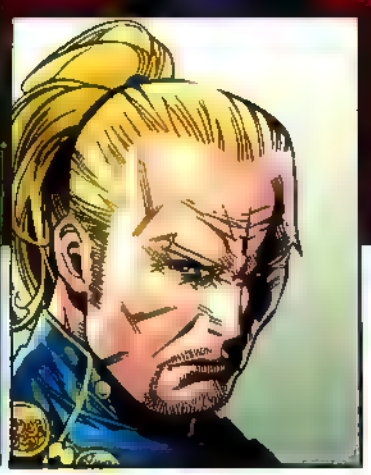
IT'S TIME TO GO INSIDE, KAI
THE CEREMONY'S GOING TO BEGIN SHORTLY
CAN'T WAIT TO GIVE AWAY YOUR DAUGHTER TO YOUR SON'S MURDERER, CAN YOU, FATHER?
WE'VE TROD THIS GROUND BEFORE, KAI YOU WERE WARNED IT'S NOT A PLACE YOU SHOULD TREAD AGAIN
LET ME MAKE THIS PERFECTLY CLEAR TO YOU AND UNDERSTAND THAT I SPEAK AS YOUR KING, NOT YOUR FATHER
YOU WILL TAKE YOUR PLACE IN THE CATHEDRAL YOU WILL REMAIN SILENT DURING THE CEREMONY
AND ONCE IT'S OVER AND KING BRON AND HIS NEW BRIDE ARE PRESENTED, YOU WILL STAND AND APPLAUD LIKE EVERYONE ELSE
NOW GO INSIDE
I DON'T KNOW YOU ANYMORE, FATHER
PERHAPS YOU NEVER DID

THIS WILL BE READY TO *COOL* IN A MOMENT. YOU CAN BEGIN POURING THE—
ZET?
IS THIS *YOUR* DOING?
NO, NOT MINE
WHRRRR
ETHAN?
RUDD
I'M SORRY I'M ARRIVING WITHOUT ANY *WARNING*
NONSENSE! AFTER ALL YOU'VE DONE, THE FOUNDING OF SANCTUARY ISLE, THE UNDERGROUND IS AT YOUR DISPOSAL
IS *ASHLEIGH* WITH YOU AND SKINK?
NO, THE RAVEN CAPITAL ISN'T A TERRIBLY *HEALTHY* PLACE FOR HER TO BE
NOR FOR *YOU*
TOO TRUE. BUT THE MOST *COMPELLING* OF REASONS BROUGHT ME HERE
I'VE COME TO *STOP* THIS MAD WEDDING OF MY SISTER TO BRON
CAN SKINK REMAIN *HERE* WHILE I GO TO THE PALACE?
OF COURSE
BUT YOU'D BETTER HURRY

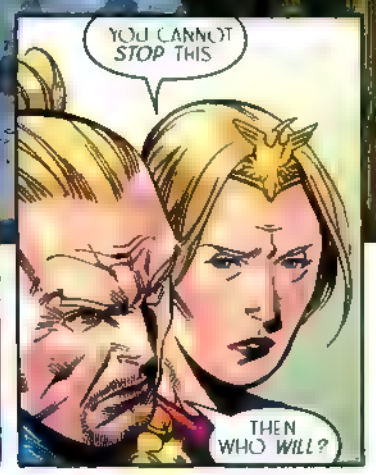

"...THEY'RE STARTING"
YLENA, ARE YOU READY?
YLENA?
I'M READY







KAI


YOU CANNOT STOP THIS
THEN WHO WILL?

YLENA
FATHER, THERE S REALLY NOTHING MORE TO BE SAID, IS THERE?
I SUPPOSE NOT
NOT ANYMORE
BRON, I GIVE YOU MY DAUGHTER
CARE FOR HER AS I WOULD
YOU LOOK LOVELY
WELCOME
TO ALL WHO HAVE GATHERED TO WITNESS THIS MOST HISTORIC EVENT

TODAY TWO GREAT KINGDOMS COME TOGETHER, FINALLY PUTTING ASIDE THE HATREDS OF THE PAST
TODAY, KING BRON OF THE RAVEN DYNASTY AND PRINCESS YLENA OF THE HERON DYNASTY DEDICATE THEMSELVES TO ONE ANOTHER
SHE'S A SWEET ONE, THAT HERON
RIPE FOR THE PLUCKING. I SAY, WHAT I WOULDN'T GIVE TO BE KING BRON
AND IN DOING SO, BRIDGE A CENTURIES-OLD CHASM BETWEEN OUR NATIONS
A DAY OF MARRIAGE HAS EVER BEEN A DAY OF REJOICING
BUT NEVER MORE SO THAN ON THIS DAY FOR WITH THIS UNION
WE CAN MOVE TOWARD A FUTURE OF PEACE

THE BOND YOU FORGE TODAY IS ONE OF YOUR HEARTS, YOUR MINDS, YOUR BODIES
IT ,S A.SO A BOND OF TRUTH, THE SAME TRUTH THAT NOW EXISTS BETWEEN THE DYNASTES
BUT TRUTH IS NOT A THING WE CAN SEE OR TOUCH. SO WE MUST MAKE A SYMBOL OF IT
SYMBOLS YOU WILL WEAR FROM THIS DAY FORWARD
"WHO BEARS THE RINGS?"
I DO
THESE I GIVE IN HONOR OF MY BROTHER, WHO IS ALSO MY KING

" AND IN MEMORY OF MY FATHER WHO *WAS* MY KING "
"KING BRON TAKE UP THIS RING "
AND LET IT BE THE SYMBOL OF THE TRUTH IN YOUR HEART
THIS RING IS YOUR DEVOTION TO YLENA. YOUR *PROMISE*
TO BE WORN ON HER FINGER ALWAYS
"AND SINCE *HALF* A PROMISE IS NO PROMISE AT ALL, THE GESTURE MUST BE MADE *COMPLETE*
"PRINCESS YLENA "

TAKE UP THIS RING
LET IT BE THE SYMBOL OF THE TRUTH IN YOUR HEART
"THE RING IS YOUR DEVOTION TO BRON, YOUR PROMISE
TO BE WORN ON HIS FINGER ALWAYS
PRINCESS YLENA?
"PLEASE PLACE THE RING UPON BRON'S FINGER
"IT IS DONE"

YOU HAVE EXCHANGED THE *SYMBOLS* OF THE TRUTH IN YOUR HEARTS
ALL THAT REMAINS IS THE EXCHANGE OF YOUR *VOWS* AND YOUR UNION, AND THE UNION OF THE RAVEN AND HERON KINGDOMS, WILL BE COMPLETE
YLENA
WILL YOU TAKE THIS MAN TO BE YOUR HUSBAND?
I WILL
BOOM

STOP THE CEREMONY
ETHAN?
WHAT'S HE DOING HERE?
STOP THE CEREMONY!
CONTINUE

BUT MY LORD
I SAID CONTINUE, HOLY MAN!
ETHAN, STOP WHERE YOU ARE
WILL YOU
KING BRON, WILL YOU TAKE THIS WOMAN TO BE YOUR WIFE?
ETHAN AS YOUR FATHER AND YOUR KING, I COMMAND YOU TO STOP WHERE YOU ARE!
I WILL
WHY, FATHER?
HOW CAN YOU LET THIS HAPPEN?
THEN NO MAN SHALL PUT ASUNDER WHAT HAS BEEN JOINED HERE TODAY
WITH THE POWER GRANTED ME BY THE RAVEN DYNASTY, AND WITH THOSE PRESENT BEARING WITNESS

LET THIS UNION BE *SEALED WITH A KISS*
NOW AND FOREVER MORE
NO
KING BRON AND QUEEN YLENA ARE *HUSBAND AND WIFE*

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Don
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Jason
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Troy
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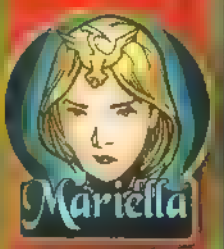

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Ethan and a small band of followers, including his sidekick Skink and the bounty hunter Exeter, took control of an island and made it a Sanctuary for the Lesser Races. Ethan then used his power to end the war.

While Bron returned to Raven lands and reclaimed the Obsidian Throne, Ethan and Ashleigh journeyed to the far kingdom of Tigris in hopes of striking a treaty. But the true intentions of Tigris were laid bare — conquest of the Raven and Heron kingdoms. As Ethan and Ashleigh escaped from Tigris, Heron King Dane announced his daughter Ylena would marry Bron to cement a lasting peace. Ethan raced to stop the ceremony, but arrived too late, and witnessed his sister's marriage to his hated enemy.

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GATHERED LORDS AND LADIES
I GIVE YOU KING BRON AND QUEEN YLENA

TH'S

TH'S CAN'T BE *HAPPENING*

. WON'T *LET IT* HAPPEN

COME AND FACE ME, *BRON!*

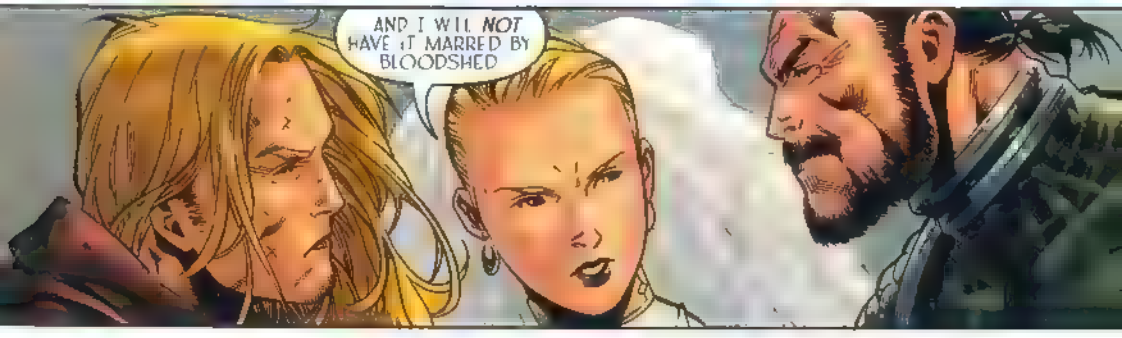
I DIDN'T THINK I'D HAVE THIS CHANCE SO SOON

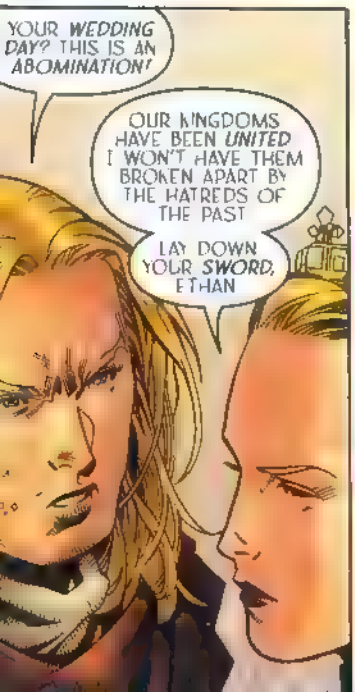
BUT I *WELCOME* IT

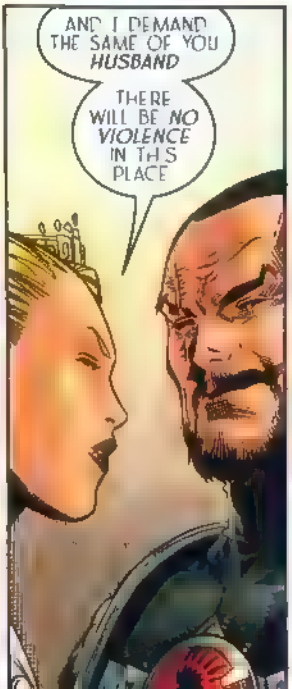
WHAT BETTER WEDDING GIFT THAN YOUR *HEAD*, ETHAN?

YOU'LL HAVE ALL YOU CAN DO TO KEEP *YOURS!*

STOP THIS!
THIS S MY WEDDING DAY


AND I WIL NOT HAVE IT MARRED BY BLOODSHED


YOUR WEDDING DAY? THIS IS AN ABOMINATION!
OUR KINGDOMS HAVE BEEN UNITED I WON'T HAVE THEM BROKEN APART BY THE HATREDS OF THE PAST
LAY DOWN YOUR SWORD, ETHAN


AND I DEMAND THE SAME OF YOU HUSBAND
THERE WILL BE NO VIOLENCE IN THIS PLACE

AS YOU WISH
WIFE

STAND DOWN
WE RE ALL FAMILY NOW
AREN T WE?
COME ALONG, MY BRIDE THERE'S NO REASON FOR US TO TARRY
I'M ANXIOUS TO BEGIN OUR LIFE TOGETHER
XENA HOW
I DON T UNDERSTAND HOW YOU COULD GO THROUGH WITH THIS
WHAT'S DONE IS DONE, ETHAN THIS IS THE WAY THINGS MUST BE
PLEASE
LET ME GO

THE QUEEN AND I DEPART AT ONCE FOR OUR HONEYMOON
AS *OUR* UNION BEGINS SO *TOO* DOES THE UNION OF THE RAVEN AND HERON KINGDOMS MAY THEY *BOTH* BE BLESSED AND FRUITFU
LET *THIS DAY* BE REMEMBERED LIKE NO OTHER!
ETHAN
I'M *PLEASED* YOU HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO WITNESS THE CEREMONY AFTER ALL
I SHALL *ENJOY* YOUR COMPANY THIS NIGHT

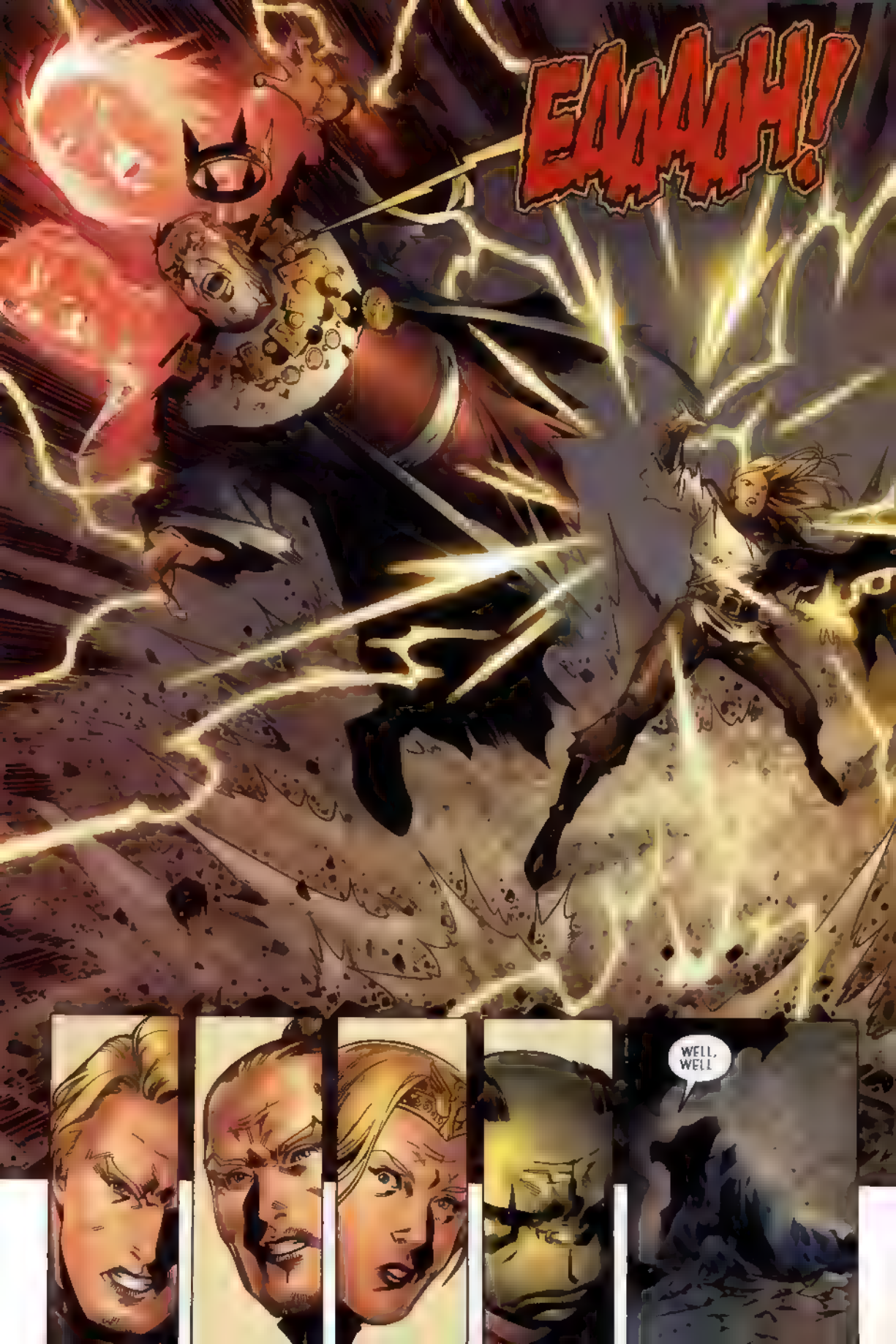
TELL ME, FATHER
TELL ME HOW YOU COULD ALLOW THIS
CALM YOURSELF BOY
IS WHAT YOU HAVE SEEN NOT EXPLANATION ENOUGH?
THIS MARRIAGE ASSURES EVERLASTING PEACE BETWEEN OUR KINGDOMS
AND WHAT WOULD MAKE YOU BELIEVE BRON COULD BE TRUSTED?
IT IS DIRE ENOUGH THAT I RETURN FROM TIGRIS WITH THE NEWS THAT THEY PLAN TO INVADE
AN INVASION?
WHILE THEY BELIEVE US TO BE VULNERABLE, YES
I'D THOUGHT I COULD NOT BE CONFRONTED WITH ANY NEWS MORE SHOCKING
HOW WRONG I WAS
THIS IS AN UNSEEMLY LOCATION IF YOU INSIST ON THIS DISCUSSION ETHAN
WE SHOULD RETIRE TO SOMEPLACE MORE SECLUDED

ETHAN
THERE IS MORE HERE THAN YOU EXPECT
SKINK?
HOW DID YOU EVEN GET INTO THE PALACE?
I SLIPPED PAST THE GUARDS DURING THE CONFUSION NOT SUCH A DIFFICULT TASK WITH THE *DISTURBANCE* YOU CREATED
I HOPE YOU DON'T MIND THAT I DISOBEYED YOUR WISHES
BUT I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT NEED ME
WHAT'S *HE* DOING HERE?
WHAT I'VE *ALWAYS* DONE – LOOKING AFTER ETHAN
SEE THAT IS *ALL* THAT YOU DO
TAKE CARE NOT TO INVOLVE YOURSELF IN THINGS THAT DO NOT *CONCERN* YOU

MOTHER? DON'T *YOU* HAVE ANYTHING TO SAY?
I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU WOULD *STAND IDLE* WHILE THIS WAS BEING CONSIDERED DIDN'T YOU AND FATHER—
DON'T BOTHER, ETHAN
FATHER'S NOT BEEN *HIMSELF*
I WARNED YOU NOT TO *TEMPT* ME, KAI MY PATIENCE S—
ENOUGH
I HAVE SEEN AND HEARD *ENOUGH*
I WILL NOT ALLOW WHAT HAS TAKEN PLACE TO *FRACTURE* THIS FAMILY ANY LONGER
I WILL NOT HAVE MY HUSBAND AND SONS BEHAVING AS *ENEMIES* THIS RIFT MUST BE REPAIRED, AND *NONE* OF YOU WILL LEAVE THIS PLACE UNTIL IT'S DONE
IF THIS IS TRULY A DAY OF *PEACE*, THEN I WILL ACCEPT *NOTHING LESS* FROM THE THREE OF YOU
THIS ANIMOSITY *ENDS* HERE AND NOW

ETHAN AND DANE. SINCE YOURS IS THE LONGEST STANDING DISAGREEMENT I EXPECT YOU TO BE THE FIRST TO PUT IT ASIDE
SHAKE HANDS AND BE DONE WITH IT
MOTHER IS RIGHT
WE MUST BURY OUR DIFFERENCES
FATHER?
OF COURSE
I TRUST ALL THAT'S BEHIND US NOW
FATHER

ARE YOU WELL, FATHER?
YOU SEEM SOMEWHAT DISTURBED
NOT AT ALL
I'M FINE
COME EMBRACE ME FATHER
WHAT?
I HARDLY THINK THAT'S
WHAT'S THE MATTER FATHER
GHH
WHY WOULDN'T YOU WANT TO EMBRACE YOUR OWN FLESH AND BLOOD?


EAAAH!
WELL, WELL

I DIDN'T THINK MORTALS WERE QUITE SO CLEVER
I SEEMS I'VE FINALLY BEEN FOUND OUT
BUT REALLY
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO ABOUT T?

MAI SHEN
IT WAS NEVER FATHER BUT
WHO IS SHE?
INTERFERING FOOL
BRON'S ALLY
HIS ACCOMPLICE
OH, LITTLE MAN, I AM SO MUCH MORE THAN THAT
YOU ACTUALLY MANAGED TO STEAL A BIT OF WHAT I AM
BUT YOU DON'T ACTUALLY BELIEVE YOU COULD DESTROY A GOD, DO YOU?
WE'LL SEE
AHFF!
YOU HAVE NO CONCEPT OF WHAT I TRULY AM
YOU COULDN'T

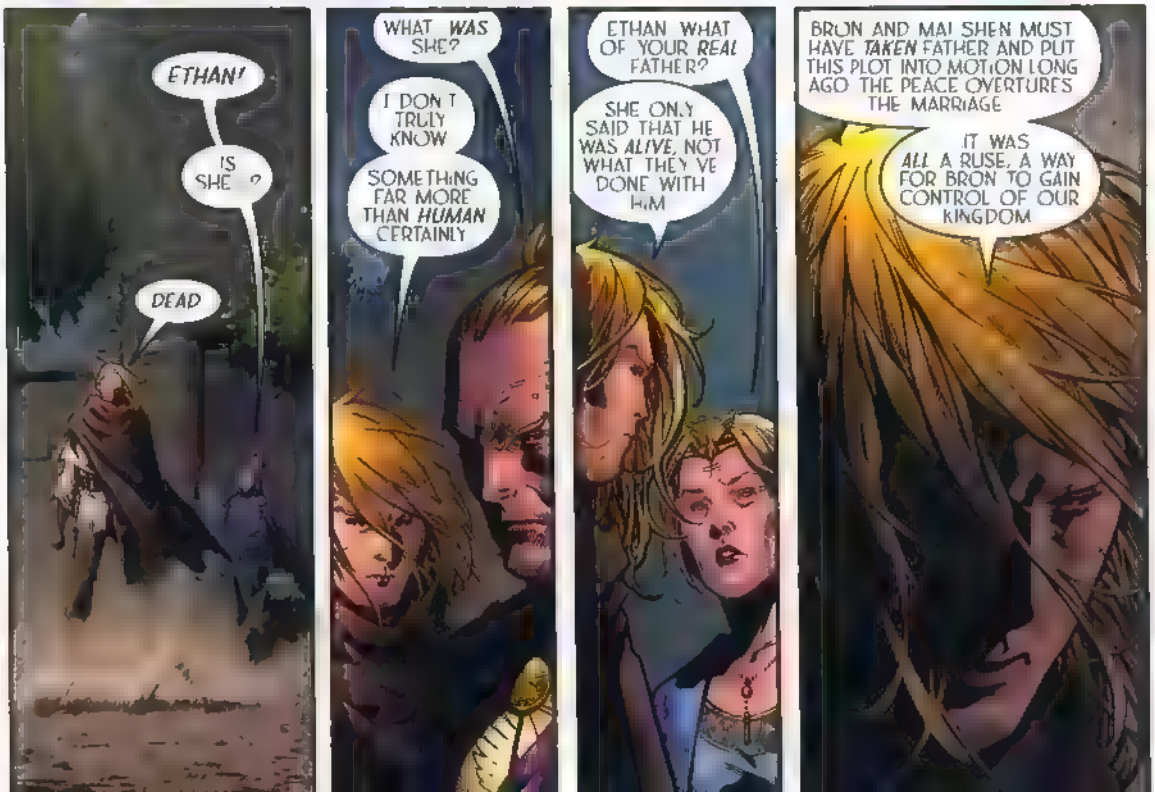
YOU WON'T FIGHT ALONE, ETHAN!
WHAT HAVE YOU DONE WITH OUR FATHER?
PLEASE
AAGH!
KAI!

PRINCE KA?
ARE YOU WELL?
BARELY
YOUR DESIRE TO AID YOUR BROTHER IS ADMIRABLE
BUT THIS FIGHT IS BEYOND YOU
AND VERY POSSIBLY BEYOND ETHAN"
UHF?!

YOU CARRY MORE OF A *STING* THAN I'D EXPECTED
I THOUGHT DESTROYING YOU WOULD BE A *FORMALITY*
NOW IT'S GOING TO BE A *PLEASURE*

LET'S FINISH THIS

HT
WHERE IS MY FATHER?!
YOUR FATHER LIVES
BUT HOW WILL YOU EVER FIND HIM
WHEN HE CANNOT FIND HIMSELF


ETHAN!
IS SHE...?
DEAD
WHAT WAS SHE?
I DON'T TRULY KNOW
SOMETHING FAR MORE THAN HUMAN CERTAINLY
ETHAN WHAT OF YOUR REAL FATHER?
SHE ONLY SAID THAT HE WAS ALIVE, NOT WHAT THEY'VE DONE WITH HIM
BRON AND MAI SHEN MUST HAVE TAKEN FATHER AND PUT THIS PLOT INTO MOTION LONG AGO THE PEACE OVERTURES THE MARRIAGE
IT WAS ALL A RUSE, A WAY FOR BRON TO GAIN CONTROL OF OUR KINGDOM

MY SONS, IF THIS *INVASION* TRULY LOOMS, WE MUST SET MATTERS ARIGHT SO THAT OUR KINGDOM IS *PREPARED* FOR IT
YOU MUST DELIVER YOUR SISTER FROM *HER* FATE
AND YOUR *FATHER* FROM HIS
WE'VE SUFFERED OUR *DIFFERENCES*, ETHAN
THERE'S BLAME ENOUGH TO GO AROUND, *ESPECIALLY* ON MY PART
BUT THAT'S ALL IN THE *PAST*, AND I'D PREFER IT *STAYS* THERE
LET'S BE *BROTHERS* AGAIN
WE ALWAYS WERE, AND NOTHING WAS *EVER* GOING TO CHANGE THAT
AND NOW WE'RE GOING TO PUT OUR *FAMILY* BACK TOGETHER

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Jim Cheung
PENCILER

Don Hillsman II
INKER

Jason Keith
COLORIST

Troy Peteri
LETTERER

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While Bron returned to Raven lands and reclaimed the Obsidian Throne, Ethan and Ashleigh journeyed to the far kingdom of Tigris in hopes of striking a treaty. But Tigris revealed its true intention of conquering the Raven and Heron kingdoms. Ethan and Ashleigh escaped from Tigris, only to learn that Ethan's sister, Ylena, was to marry Bron in order to assure peace.

Ethan arrived too late to stop the ceremony. After Bron and Ylena departed for their honeymoon, Ethan discovered his "father" was in fact Bron's disguised ally Mai Shen, and the marriage was part of a larger plot. Ethan slew Mai Shen and, along with his brother Kai, set off to free Ylena from Bron's clutches.

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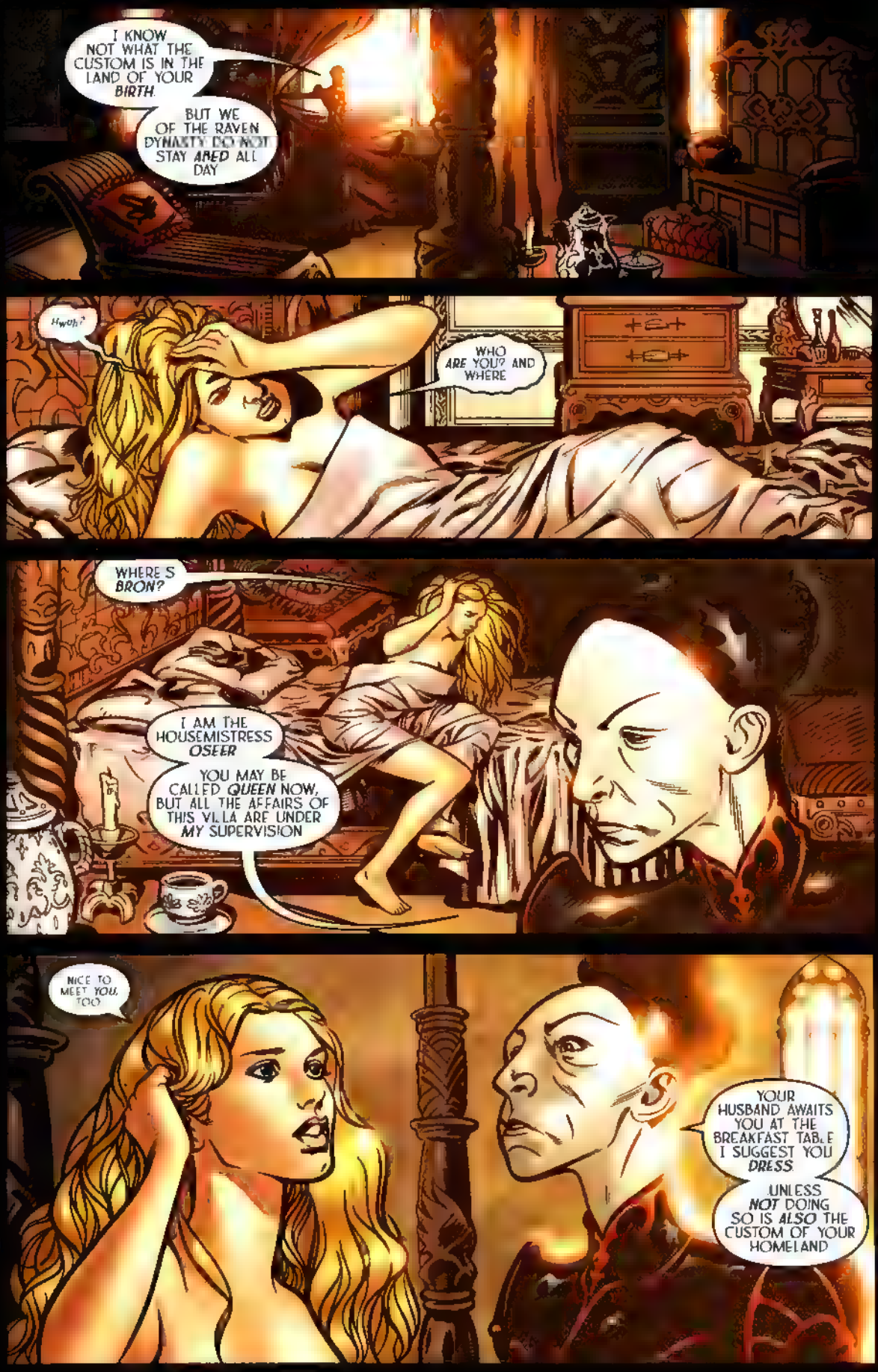
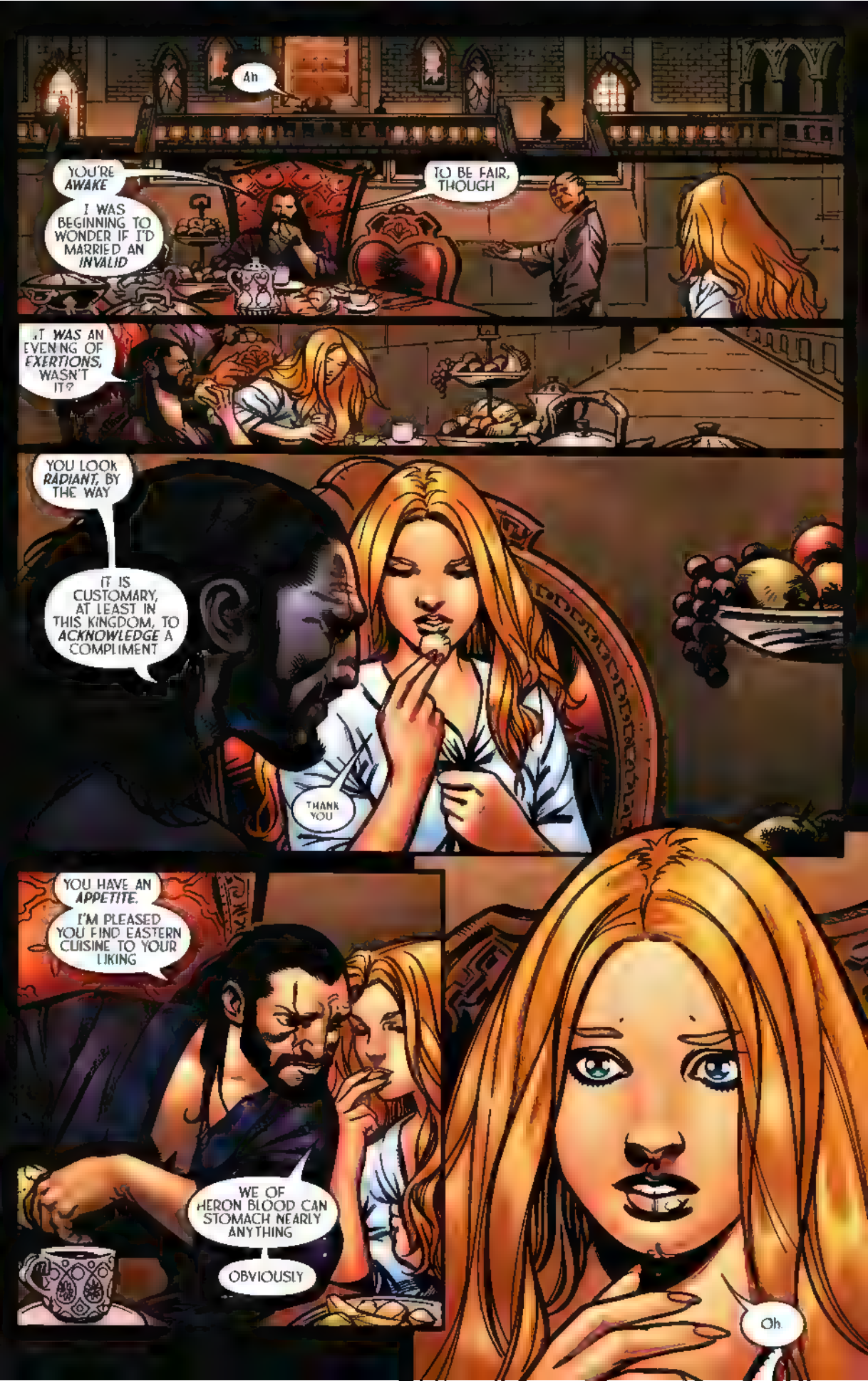
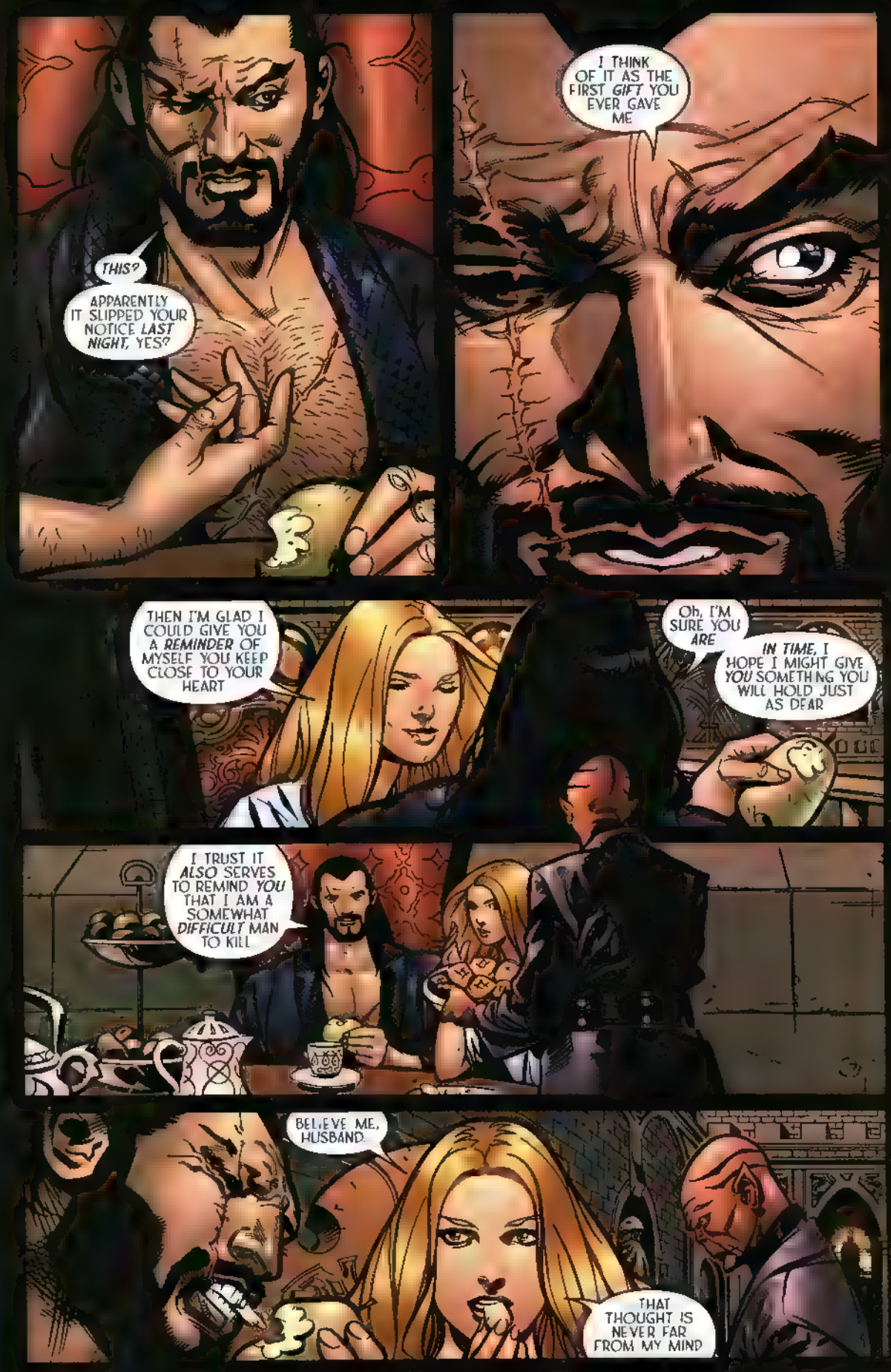
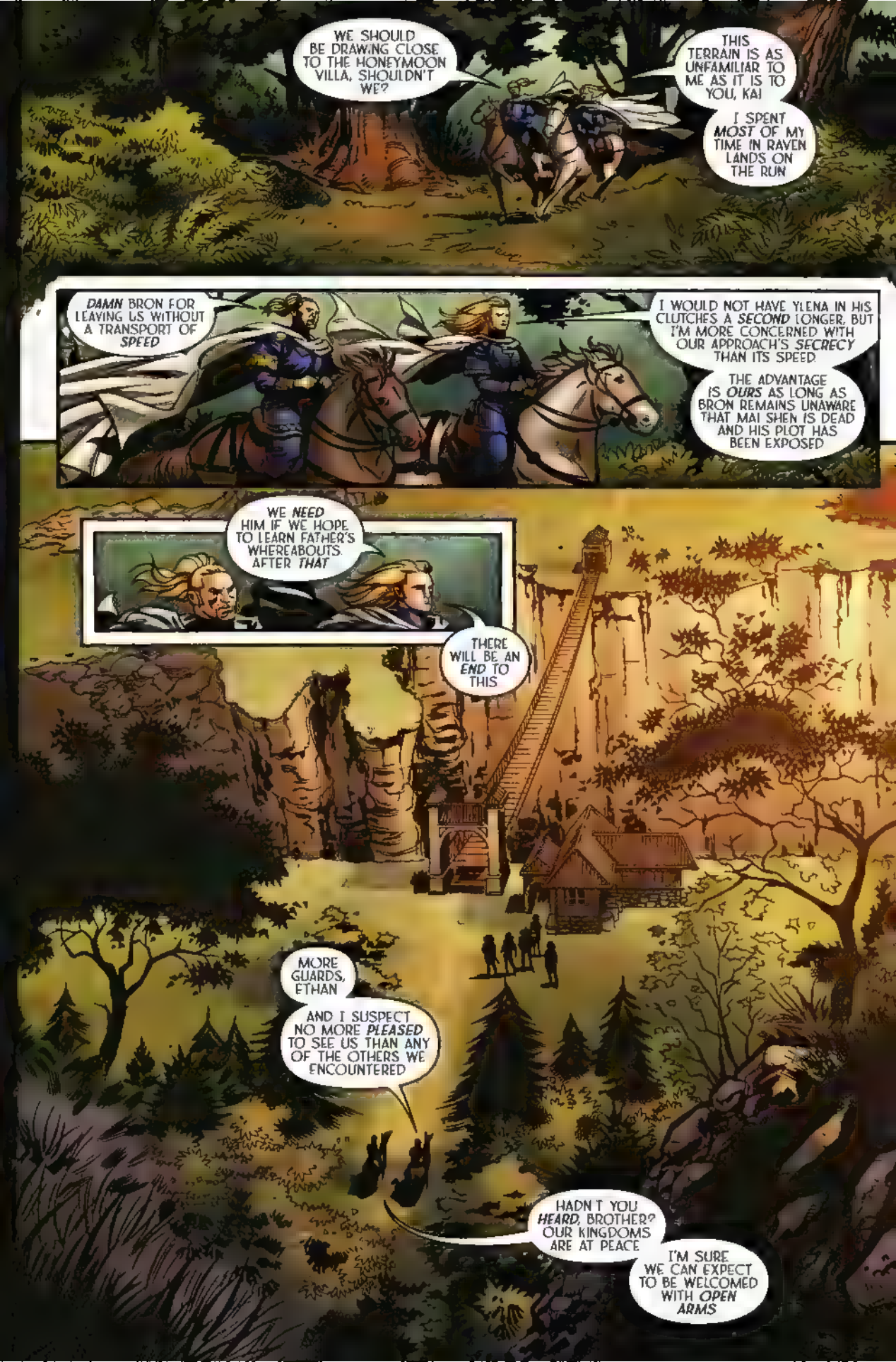
"THE SUN HAS RISEN, MY QUEEN."
AND SO SHOULD YOU


I KNOW NOT WHAT THE CUSTOM IS IN THE LAND OF YOUR BIRTH
BUT WE OF THE RAVEN DYNASTY DO NOT STAY ABED ALL DAY
Hwuh?
WHO ARE YOU? AND WHERE
WHERE'S BRON?
I AM THE HOUSEMISTRESS OSEER
YOU MAY BE CALLED QUEEN NOW, BUT ALL THE AFFAIRS OF THIS VILLA ARE UNDER MY SUPERVISION
NICE TO MEET YOU, TOO
YOUR HUSBAND AWAITS YOU AT THE BREAKFAST TABLE I SUGGEST YOU DRESS
UNLESS NOT DOING SO IS ALSO THE CUSTOM OF YOUR HOMELAND


Ah
YOU'RE AWAKE
I WAS BEGINNING TO WONDER IF I'D MARRIED AN INVALID
TO BE FAIR, THOUGH
IT WAS AN EVENING OF EXERTIONS, WASN'T IT?
YOU LOOK RADIANT, BY THE WAY
IT IS CUSTOMARY, AT LEAST IN THIS KINGDOM, TO ACKNOWLEDGE A COMPLIMENT
THANK YOU
YOU HAVE AN APPETITE.
I'M PLEASED YOU FIND EASTERN CUISINE TO YOUR LIKING
WE OF HERON BLOOD CAN STOMACH NEARLY ANYTHING
OBVIOUSLY
Oh


THIS?
APPARENTLY IT SLIPPED YOUR NOTICE *LAST NIGHT*, YES?
I THINK OF IT AS THE FIRST *GIFT* YOU EVER GAVE ME
THEN I'M GLAD I COULD GIVE YOU A *REMINDER* OF MYSELF YOU KEEP CLOSE TO YOUR HEART
Oh, I'M SURE YOU *ARE*
IN TIME, I HOPE I MIGHT GIVE *YOU* SOMETHING YOU WILL HOLD JUST AS DEAR
I TRUST IT *ALSO* SERVES TO REMIND *YOU* THAT I AM A SOMEWHAT *DIFFICULT* MAN TO KILL
BELIEVE ME, HUSBAND.
THAT THOUGHT IS NEVER FAR FROM MY MIND


WE SHOULD BE DRAWING CLOSE TO THE HONEYMOON VILLA, SHOULDN'T WE?
THIS TERRAIN IS AS UNFAMILIAR TO ME AS IT IS TO YOU, KAI
I SPENT MOST OF MY TIME IN RAVEN LANDS ON THE RUN
DAMN BRON FOR LEAVING US WITHOUT A TRANSPORT OF SPEED
I WOULD NOT HAVE YLENA IN HIS CLUTCHES A SECOND LONGER, BUT I'M MORE CONCERNED WITH OUR APPROACH'S SECRECY THAN ITS SPEED
THE ADVANTAGE IS OURS AS LONG AS BRON REMAINS UNAWARE THAT MAI SHEN IS DEAD AND HIS PLOT HAS BEEN EXPOSED
WE NEED HIM IF WE HOPE TO LEARN FATHER'S WHEREABOUTS AFTER THAT
THERE WILL BE AN END TO THIS
MORE GUARDS, ETHAN
AND I SUSPECT NO MORE PLEASED TO SEE US THAN ANY OF THE OTHERS WE ENCOUNTERED
HADN'T YOU HEARD, BROTHER? OUR KINGDOMS ARE AT PEACE
I'M SURE WE CAN EXPECT TO BE WELCOMED WITH OPEN ARMS

I ASK YOU TO STAND ASIDE
.. WE HAVE BUSINESS WITH YOUR KING AT HIS VILLA TO THE SOUTH
I AM PRINCE ETHAN OF THE –
I KNOW WHO YOU ARE
BOTH OF YOU
BUT YOU MUST TAKE ME FOR A DAMN FOOL IF YOU THINK I OR MY MEN CARE
OUR KING MAY HAVE MARRIED YOUR SLIP OF A SISTER BUT YOU HOLD NO SWAY HERE, HERON
I HAVE ASKED ONCE THAT YOU STAND ASIDE AND LET US PASS
IF I AM FORCED TO ASK AGAIN
MORE COMING FROM THE GUARDHOUSE ETHAN
IT WILL BE MUCH TO YOUR REGRET

YOU ARE IN NO POSITION TO MAKE *THREATS*, BOY!
NOT IN *THIS* KINGDOM!
THEN YOU BRING THIS UPON YOURSELVES
SPILL BLOOD, BROTHER, BUT LEAVE NO *CORPSES* IN OUR WAKE
FOR PITY'S SAKE, ETHAN
ENOUGH OF THIS!
INDEED.

ENOUGH
PRINCE KORT...
MY LORD, I BEG YOUR FORGIVENESS WE DID NOT KNOW YOU WERE—
I COULD HAVE YOU *EXECUTED* FOR YOUR BEHAVIOR, *ALL* OF YOU.
BUT I *WON'T* REMEMBER WHO SHOWED YOU *MERCY*
IN THE DAYS AHEAD, I WILL NEED MEN WHOSE *LOYALTY* TO ME IS UNQUESTIONED
ETHAN, KAI
I CAN UNDERSTAND YOUR *ANXIOUSNESS*, BUT IT'S BEST IF YOU DO NOT RIDE AHEAD OF THE COLUMN AGAIN
I REMIND YOU I HAVE OFFERED MY *AID* IT WOULD BE WISE TO TAKE FULL ADVANTAGE OF IT

YOU NEED NOT CATALOG MY BROTHER'S VILLAINY
NOT TO ME
AND I'LL REMIND YOU WE WOULD NOT BE UNDERTAKING THIS JOURNEY IF YOUR BROTHER WAS NOT A BLOODY-HANDED—
KAI, PLEASE
WE SEEK THE SAME END
I SIMPLY POINT OUT WE ARE MORE LIKELY TO OBTAIN IT IF OUR EFFORTS ARE POOLED
THERE IS MORE BLOOD ON BRON'S HANDS THAN MOST KNOW, AND HE WILL PAY THE PRICE FOR IT
JUSTICE HAS BEEN TOO LONG IN COMING
"BUT NOW IT BEARS DOWN SWIFTLY"

MUCH BETTER
MUCH MORE APPROPRIATE
IF YOU'RE TO BE THE RAVEN QUEEN, YOU MUST LEARN TO DRESS THE PART
PUT ME IN WHATEVER OUTFIT YOU LIKE, I'LL NEVER BE ONE OF YOU
VERY TRUE. YOU ARE AN OUTSIDER HERE.
MY PEOPLE WILL ACCEPT YOU ONLY BECAUSE I TELL THEM TO
WALK WITH ME

YOU FACE AN UNFAMILIAR PATH, YLENA. A MAZE YOU DON'T KNOW HOW TO NAVIGATE
YOU CAN STRUGGLE ALONG ON YOUR OWN, SEEKING YOUR WAY ALONE
OR YOU CAN ACCEPT THE HAND OF ONE WHO HAS WALKED THE PATH BEFORE
YOU CANNOT CHANGE THE LIFE THAT'S BEEN PLACED BEFORE YOU.
AND WHAT MUST BE CAN BE EASIER
A PRETTY SPEECH
I AM NOT A CRUEL MAN UNLESS I AM FORCED TO BE
THIS MARRIAGE SERVES MY PURPOSES. MAKING YOU SUFFER DOES NOT SERVE ME IN ANY WAY
LEARN TO ACCEPT ME

BUT, LIKE EVERYTHING ELSE ABOUT YOU, A LIE
BROTHER
COME ALL THIS WAY TO WISH ME WELL, HAVE YOU?
AND I SEE YOU BROUGHT FRIENDS
ETHAN? WHAT'S

IT'S A LIE, YLENA ALL OF IT
WHAT BRON COULDN'T ACCOMPLISH BY WAR HE TRIED TO BRING ABOUT THROUGH TREACHERY
HE AND MAI SHEN CONSPIRED TO BRING THE HERON KINGDOM UNDER HIS RULE. THEY KIDNAPPED OUR FATHER, AND MAI SHEN
WHATEVER SHE WAS
HAS BEEN MASQUERADING AS HIM
FATHER NEVER BLESSED YOUR MARRIAGE
HE NEVER WANTED IT
MAI SHEN DIED FOR HER PART IN THIS. BRON TELL ME WHERE MY FATHER IS
OR SHARE HER FATE
NO GREAT LOSS
SHE'D SERVED HER PURPOSE
LIKE ME?

SWAK
I SHOULD HAVE *HEEDED* YOUR WARNINGS, KAI
YOUR REIGN IS *OVER*, BRON
HOW LONG DID YOU THINK YOU COULD *AVOID* YOUR DESERVED FATE?
HOW LONG DID YOU THINK OUR FATHER'S *MURDER* WOULD GO UNPUNISHED?
FINALLY YOU FIND THE COURAGE TO GIVE VOICE TO YOUR SUSPICIONS
YOU EXPECT ME TO *DENY* ANY OF IT, LITTLE BROTHER?
WHY *BOTHER*?

IT'S NOT AS IF YOU'RE GOING TO *DO* ANYTHING ABOUT IT
NO
HE'S NOT GOING TO DO ANYTHING

THIS BATTLE IS MINE
IT'S ALWAYS BEEN MINE
IT WAS BOUND TO COME TO THIS, WASN'T IT?
ETHAN'S NOT THE ONLY ONE WHO DESERVES JUSTICE
NO, YLENA!
YOU HAVE MORE THAN JUST CAUSE, BUT AS IN THE ARENA, THIS FIGHT IS ETHAN'S ALONE
WE MUST LEAVE HIM TO IT

I SHOULD *THANK* YOU, ETHAN
YOU'VE MADE MY TASK ALL THE *EASIER*
BOTH HERON BROTHERS HERE, RIPE FOR THE
HFF!
SLAUGHTER
GET UP
HAVE YOU WONDERED WHAT IT WOULD TRULY TAKE TO *KILL* ONE OF US?

LET'S FIND OUT
I'M ALMOST DISAPPOINTED TO KILL YOU, ETHAN
HN?!
YOUR SISTER ALREADY MY QUEEN, YOUR KINGDOM RIPE FOR THE PLUCKING
I'D ENJOY MAKING YOU BEAR WITNESS TO MY TRIUMPH
HGK!
YOU WON'T BEAR WITNESS TO THE NEXT SUNRISE!

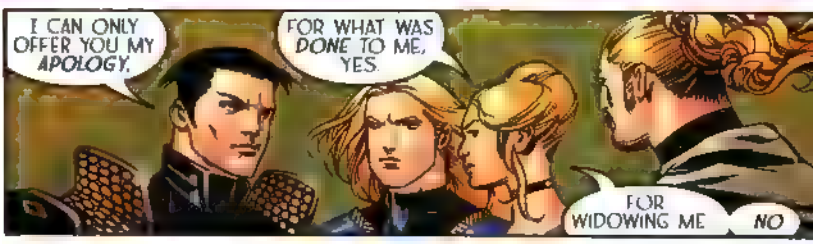
YOU HAVE ONE HOPE OF LIVING BEYOND THE NEXT FEW MOMENTS BRON
TELL ME WHAT'S BEEN DONE WITH MY FATHER
YOUR FATHER?
NN-
HE'S
heh
HE'S ONE OF MY LOYAL SUBJECTS
WHAT MORE FITTING FATE

THOUGH TO BE FAR, IT WAS MAI SHEN WHO MADE IT COME TO PASS
YOUR FATHER HIDES IN PLAIN SIGHT
BUT YOU'LL NEVER FIND HIM

HRGK
LITTLE BROTHER?
YOU FINALLY
SURPRISE!

YOU SLEW YOUR OWN BROTHER
FOR ALL HE'S DONE
SLAYING HIM WAS TOO KIND A FATE
ETHAN!

BRON'S TRULY DEAD?
I'M AFRAID I'VE WIDOWED YOU, YLENA


I CAN ONLY OFFER YOU MY APOLOGY.
FOR WHAT WAS DONE TO ME, YES.
FOR WIDOWING ME
NO

MY FATHER HAS BEEN AVENGED AND YOU HAVE BEEN FREED FROM THE SHACKLES OF THIS FALSE MARRIAGE
I PROMISE YOU
THE NEW RAVEN KING WILL SALVAGE THIS PEACE BETWEEN OUR TWO KINGDOMS

IT'S OVER AT LEAST THIS PART OF IT
DID BRON TELL YOU ANYTHING ABOUT FATHER?
VERY LITTLE
CRYPTIC...

BUT A PLACE TO START, AT LEAST
WE WILL FIND HIM
THEN WE LEAVE NOW, BROTHER
YOU TWO DON'T THINK YOU'RE GOING WITHOUT ME, DO YOU?

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The CrossGen Universe created by Mark Alessi & Gina M. Villa

Special thanks to Scott Ciencin

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Thus Far in Scion

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War between the kingdoms followed, but as the conflict raged, Ethan pledged his loyalty to the Underground movement dedicated to freeing the genetically engineered Lesser Races. His companion in this was Ashleigh, Raven princess and sister to Bron. Eventually the two gave in to their mutual attraction and became lovers.

Ethan and a small band of followers, including his sidekick Skink and the bounty hunter Exeter, took control of an island and made it a Sanctuary for the Lesser Races. Ethan then used his power to end the war.

While Bron returned to Raven lands and reclaimed the Obsidian Throne, Ethan and Ashleigh journeyed to the far kingdom of Tigris in hopes of striking a treaty. But Tigris revealed its true intention of conquering the Raven and Heron kingdoms. Ethan and Ashleigh escaped from Tigris, only to learn that Ethan's sister, Ylena, was to marry Bron in order to assure peace.

Ethan arrived too late to stop the ceremony, but discovered his "father" was in fact Bron's disguised ally Mai Shen, and the marriage was part of a larger plot. Ethan slew Mai Shen, then confronted Bron. But it was Bron's long-suffering brother, Kort, who finally slew the villain. Ethan, Kai and Ylena then set off to find their missing father.

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NEXT TOWN'S NOT MUCH FARTHER
WHICH ONE IS IT? WE'VE SEEN SO MANY I'VE LOST TRACK
I TRUTHFULLY DON'T CARE *WHAT* IT'S CALLED

AS LONG AS I CAN GET A CHANGE OF *CLOTHES* I'M SOAKED TO THE SKIN

BAD ENOUGH WE'VE BEEN AT THIS A *FORTNIGHT* TO NO AVAIL

NOW THIS DAMNABLE EASTERN WEATHER UNLEASHES ITSELF UPON US

YOUR *DISPOSITION* IS AS GRIM AS THESE SODDEN SKIES, SISTER

AND ARE *YOUR* SPIRITS BRIGHT WHEN WE'VE HAD NOT EVEN A RUMOR OF

TAKE THEM!

ANFF!

STAND DOWN, OR THIS WOOD WILL BE YOUR BURIAL GROUND!
YOU GET ONE WARNING!
IT'S HIM

THE HUMAN WHO SLEW OUR BROTHERS IN THE MOUNTAINS
INDEED, THAT *WAS* ME
I HAD NO QUARREL WITH YOU *THEN* MY SIBLINGS AND I WANT NO QUARREL *NOW*
WHAT *CAUSE* HAVE YOU TO ATTACK US?
THE *SAME* NOW AS THEN!
WE WERE CREATED TO BE *SOLDIERS* WE SURVIVE IN THE ONLY MANNER WE CAN
PERHAPS ONCE THAT WAS *TRUE*
YOU *WERE* MADE FOR ONE PURPOSE BUT YOU CAN *TURN* FROM THAT PURPOSE
THERE IS ANOTHER WAY FOR YOU NOW

WHAT WAY?
THERE IS A PLACE WHERE YOU ALL OF YOU CAN LIVE A DIFFERENT LIFE, NOT THIS EXISTENCE OF THIEVERY AND VIOLENCE
THERE IS AN ISLAND CALLED SANCTUARY, WHERE THE LESSER RACES LIVE IN FREEDOM
WE HAVE
HEARD SUCH TALES BUT WE DID NOT BELIEVE SUCH A PLACE COULD EXIST
Ah
NOW IT'S CLEAR TO ME YOU ARE THE ONE IN THE TALES
YOU ARE ETHAN THE LIBERATOR
JUST ETHAN WILL DO
THIS IS MY BROTHER KAI, AND MY SISTER, YLENA
BUT I STILL DO NOT UNDERSTAND
WHY WOULD HUMANS HELP THE LESSER RACES?
NOT ALL HUMANS WOULD BUT SOME HAVE
THE TRUE COURAGE WAS THAT OF THE LESSER RACES
THOSE WHO CAST OFF THEIR OLD LIVES AND PURSUED SOMETHING BETTER
MY BROTHERS AND I WERE MADE FOR WAR WE ARE SHUNNED EVEN BY OTHERS OF OUR KIND
THERE WOULD BE NO PLACE FOR US, EVEN IN THIS SANCTUARY YOU SPEAK OF

THERE IS ONE UPON THE ISLAND MUCH *LIKE* YOU
THE BOUNTY HUNTER *EXETER* WAS FEARED AND HATED BY HIS OWN KIND BUT *HE* CHANGED WHAT HE WAS
NONE OF WHAT HAS COME TO PASS COULD HAVE BEEN ACCOMPLISHED WITHOUT HIM
TAKE MY COMPASS
AND *SEEK OUT* EXETER UPON THE SANCTUARY ISLE HE'LL KNOW THIS IS FROM ME
YOU *WILL* BE WELCOMED
WE SHALL *CONSIDER* IT
IF THE ISLAND IS YOUR HOME NOW, WHAT BRINGS YOU SO DEEP INTO RAVEN LANDS?
WE SEARCH FOR OUR *FATHER*
HE WAS *LOST* AND WE MUST FIND HIM AND BRING HIM BACK TO HIS KINGDOM
WITH ALL THAT'S HAPPENED BETWEEN THE HERON AND RAVEN KINGDOMS, AND ALL THAT'S *ABOUT* TO HAPPEN
WE THOUGHT IT BEST TO UNDERTAKE THIS *OURSELVES* IN SECRET
I WISH YOU LUCK A TOWN LIES AHEAD, BUT I FEAR YOU WILL FIND *LITTLE* THERE
MY THANKS.
PERHAPS WE'LL MEET AGAIN
PERHAPS WE WILL

ALWAYS GOOD FOR A LAUGH
WE HAVE ETHAN?
REALISTICALLY
IT'S CERTAINLY NOT A QUESTION OF *IF* TIGRIS WILL INVADE
BUT *WHEN*
IT'S TO OUR ADVANTAGE THAT THEY'RE LAUNCHING THIS INVASION FROM THE *OTHER SIDE* OF AVALON
THE PREPARATIONS AND LOGISTICS ARE THAT MUCH MORE DIFFICULT
AND AT LEAST WE KNOW THEY'RE *COMING*
I'D SAY WE HAVE ANOTHER FEW WEEKS BEFORE THEY'RE ON OUR DOORSTEP *NO MORE*
WE'D BEST HAVE OUR HOUSE *IN ORDER* BEFORE THEN
BUT IF WE *DON'T*, KAI, IF WE DON'T *FIND* FATHER, THE THRONE FALLS TO *YOU*
ARE YOU *PREPARED* IF THAT COMES TO PASS?

NO
TRUTHFULLY, I DON'T THINK I AM
NONE OF US WOULD BE, KAI, WERE WE IN YOUR POSITION THE KINGDOM NEEDS FATHER TO LEAD IT, ESPECIALLY NOW
WE HAVE TO FIND HIM
BUT THIS DEEP INTO RAVEN LANDS WE CAN'T EXACTLY STROLL IN AND SHOW OFF HIS PICTURE
WE'VE STILL NO BETTER OPTION THAN A FEW QUESTIONS AT THE LOCAL TAV—
FOR THE LAST TIME
NO MONEY, NO DRINKS!

UGFF!
NEED A DR NK
NEED A DR NK BECAUSE I CAN T REMEMBER
WHAT I FORGOT
JUST MAKE SURE YOU REMEMBER TO STAY OUT OF HERE!
I CATCH YOU FILCHING COINS AGAIN AND YOU'LL BE MISSING FINGERS!
HLLF
POOR LOST SOUL
TRAGIC, REALLY

WELL
THIS IS LOVELY
I'LL DO IT
WAIT HERE
YOU'RE NOT FROM THESE PARTS WHAT YOU WANT?
A LITTLE HELP, HOPEFULLY I'M LOOKING FOR A MAN
MIDDLE-AGED, BEARDED, BIT OF A GIRTH AROUND HIS MIDDLE
LADY, YOU'VE JUST DESCRIBED HALF THE MEN WHO PASS THROUGH THIS PLACE
HE'D PROBABLY HAVE ARRIVED FAIRLY RECENTLY
MIGHT LOOK A BIT LIKE ME
CAN'T HELP YOU
NOW IF YOU'RE GOING TO TAKE UP SPACE, ORDER A DRINK
THIS ISN'T A CHARITY HOUSE

SWEET THING, I COULDN'T HELP OVERHEARING YOU'RE LOOKING FOR A MAN, AND
WELL, I'M RIGHT HERE
HERE WE GO AGAIN
LET HER
SHE'S STILL WORKING OUT SOME ISSUES
I SHOULD WARN YOU I'M MARRIED
Oh, MARRIAGE ISN'T WHAT I'VE GOT ON MY MIND. I'M INTERESTED IN SKIPPING RIGHT TO THE –
URKK!

ANYONE ELSE?
YOU KNOW WHO THAT IS?
THAT'S THE WOMAN WHO MARRIED KING BRON SHE'S THAT HERON PRINCESS, THE—
WHO SHE IS
AND WHO WE ARE, IS NONE OF YOUR CONCERN
WHILE IT'S BEEN A PLEASURE MEETING ALL OF YOU, I THINK WE'LL BE MOVING ON NOW
THE FIRST PERSON WHO STEPS OUT THIS DOOR AFTER US
WILL BE MOST UNHAPPY WITH THE RECEPTION HE RECEIVES

THAT DIDN'T GO TERRIBLY WELL
NOT TERRIBLY, *UNEXPECTEDLY*, UNFORTUNATELY
HOW ARE WE GOING TO *ALLY* OURSELVES WITH THESE PEOPLE WHEN THE INVASION COMES?
WE'VE MORE *IMMEDIATE* CONCERNS THAN COZYING UP TO THE RAVENS
WE'RE NO CLOSER TO FINDING FATHER
WHAT CHOICE DO WE HAVE BUT TO *CONTINUE* WHAT WE'RE DOING? WE MOVE ON TO THE *NEXT* TOWN
THOUGH WE *ARE* RUNNING OUT OF—
WOULD YOU *LOOK* AT THIS?
COME ON, THERE'S NOTHING IN THERE FOR YOU
I SAID *STOP*, YOU OLD DRUNK

LEAVE ME ALONE
FATHER?
LEAVE ME ALONE!

FATHER!
FATHER, WAIT! DON'T YOU RECOGNIZE US?
NNNH!
WAIT!
PLEASE DON'T HURT ME
OF COURSE I'M NOT GOING TO HURT YOU
BUT WHY ARE YOU FIGHTING ME?
IT'S ME, IT'S ETHAN
YOUR SON.
DON'T YOU KNOW ME?
HOW COULD I KNOW YOU
WHEN I DON'T KNOW MYSELF?

WHAT HAPPENED?
WHY DID FATHER RUN FROM US?
BECAUSE HE DOESN'T KNOW US

HE SAYS HE DOESN'T KNOW US OR HIMSELF
THIS HAS TO BE MAI SHEN'S DOING BRON SAID AS MUCH.
HE SAID FATHER WAS HIDING IN PLAIN SIGHT THIS IS WHAT HE MEANT
EVEN MAI SHEN TOLD ME FATHER COULDN'T FIND HIMSELF SHE MUST HAVE WIPED HIS MEMORY SOMEHOW
THEY PROBABLY THOUGHT THIS WAS MORE AMUSING THAN SIMPLY KILLING HIM THEY TAUNT US EVEN FROM THEIR GRAVES

WHO
WHO ARE YOU PEOPLE?
WHY ARE YOU BOTHERING ME?

WE ONLY WANT TO HELP YOU PLEASE

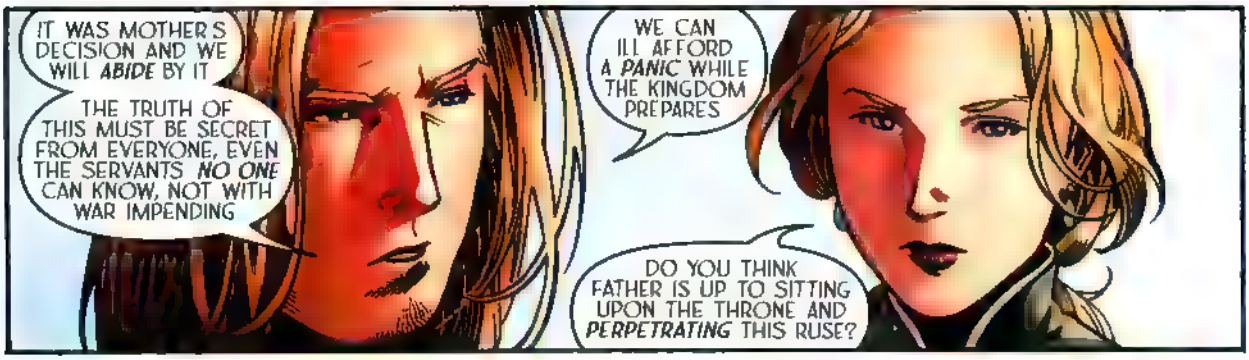
LET US

WHY DID YOU CALL ME *FATHER?*
BECAUSE WE ARE YOUR CHILDREN
ALL *THREE* OF US
I'M *ETHAN*
THIS IS YLENA
AND KAI
I HAVE *CHILDREN* I CANNOT EVEN REMEMBER?
THERE'S *MORE*
YOUR NAME IS DANE YOU ARE *KING* OF THE HERON KINGDOM

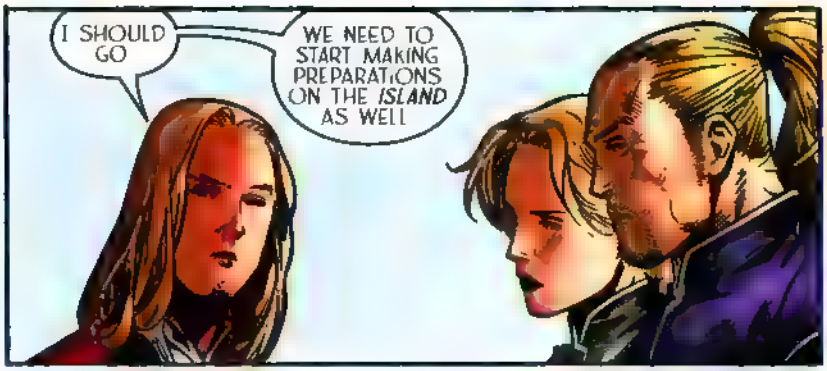
I AM
A KING?
WHY WHY WOULD SOMEONE STEAL MY ENTIRE LIFE?
WE CAN HELP YOU GET IT BACK
I KNOW THIS MUST BE OVERWHELMING I KNOW YOU HAVE NO REASON TO BELIEVE US
BUT EVEN IF YOU CAN'T ACCEPT EVERYTHING WE'RE TELLING YOU .
AT LEAST TRUST US
YOU'RE NOT ONLY OUR FATHER
YOU'RE OUR KING WE'RE SWORN TO SERVE YOU
PLEASE...
LET US TAKE YOU HOME

DANE
HUSBAND
THE CHILDREN TOLD ME YOU INSISTED ON WAITING TO SEE ME UNTIL YOU WERE PRESENTABLE
DON'T YOU THINK THAT WAS A LITTLE SILLY? I'M YOUR WIFE
I WANTED TO BE—
THERE COULD BE NO MORE BEAUTIFUL SIGHT THAN YOUR FACE, MY LOVE, WHATEVER ITS STATE
I THOUGHT I'D LOST YOU
I
I'M SORRY, BUT I DON'T REMEMBER YOU
I DON'T REMEMBER ANYTHING
IT'S ALL RIGHT
WE'RE GOING TO BE FINE

SO THIS IS THE WAY IT'S TO BE
WHAT *ELSE* CAN WE DO? HE TRULY REMEMBERS *NOTHING* OF HIS LIFE


IT WAS MOTHER'S DECISION AND WE WILL *ABIDE* BY IT
THE TRUTH OF THIS MUST BE SECRET FROM EVERYONE, EVEN THE SERVANTS *NO ONE* CAN KNOW, NOT WITH WAR IMPENDING
WE CAN ILL AFFORD A *PANIC* WHILE THE KINGDOM PREPARES
DO YOU THINK FATHER IS UP TO SITTING UPON THE THRONE AND *PERPETRATING* THIS RUSE?

WITH OUR HELP, HE'LL *HAVE* TO BE
I ONLY HOPE THERE'S TIME FOR HIM TO RECOVER HIS MEMORIES BEFORE TIGRIS LAUNCHES ITS INVASION
IS A *FEW WEEKS* ENOUGH TO RELEARN A LIFETIME?


I SHOULD GO
WE NEED TO START MAKING PREPARATIONS ON THE *ISLAND* AS WELL

DON'T GO FAR, BROTHER WE'RE GOING TO *NEED* YOU
WE'RE GOING TO NEED *EACH OTHER* NOW MORE THAN EVER

I DON'T LIKE TO THINK ABOUT WHERE I MIGHT BE WITHOUT YOU, ETHAN
I'M SORRY FOR ALL YOU'VE BEEN THROUGH, YLENA
BUT AT LEAST IT'S *OVER*

" AND WE'LL BE READY FOR WHAT COMES NEXT "

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Ashleigh
Pencils by Andy Smith,
inks by Matt Ryan,
colors by Morry Hollowell

"A hybrid of *Star Wars* and *Prince Valiant*!" — *Publishers Weekly*

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Ethan discovered his "father" was, in fact, Bron's disguised ally Mai Shen, and the marriage was part of a larger plot. Ethan slew Mai Shen, then confronted Bron, but it was Bron's long-suffering brother, Kort, who finally slew the villain. Ethan, Kai and Ylena searched for their missing father, finding him in a remote village, but discovered he'd been stripped of all his memories.

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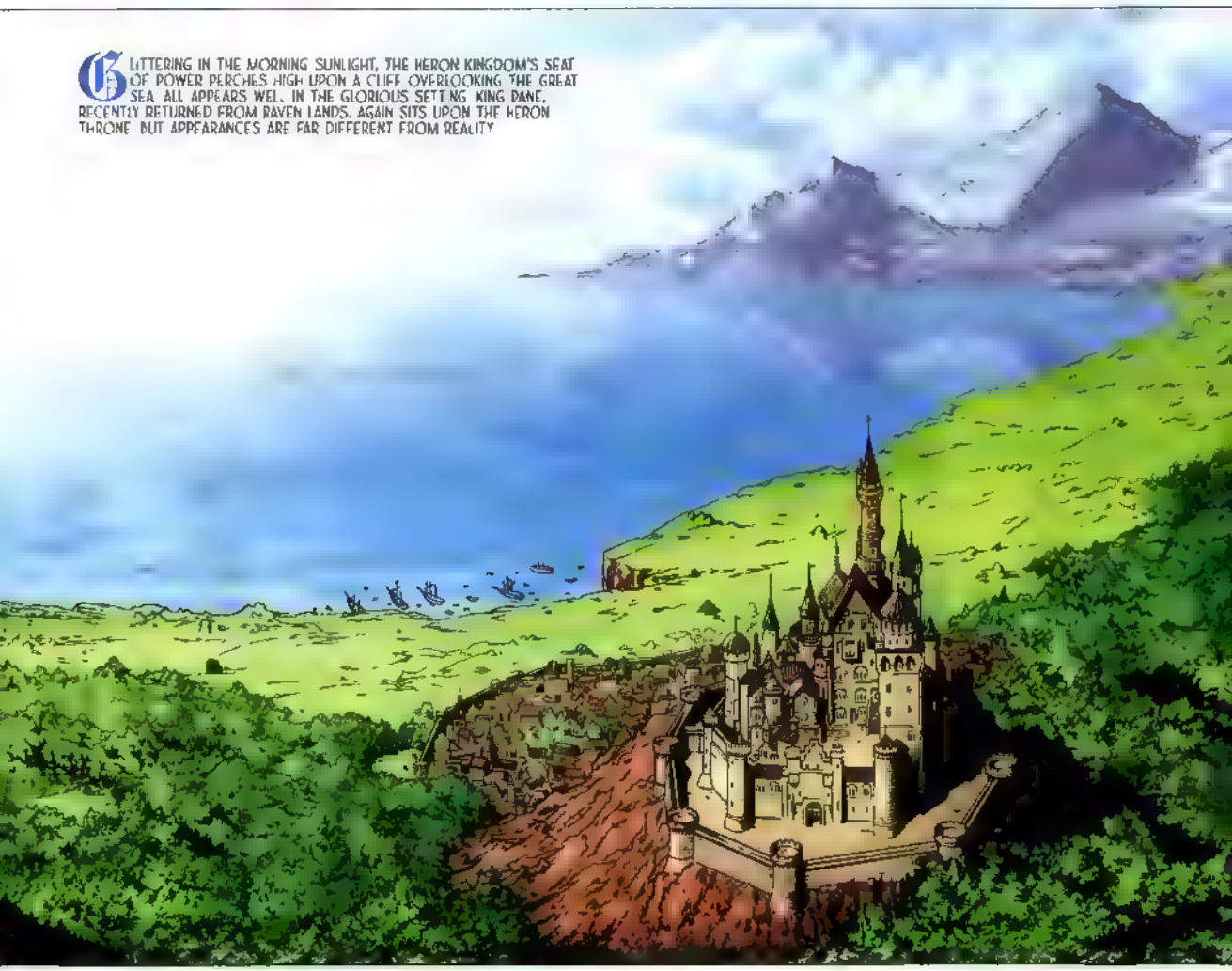
FOR CENTURIES, TWO GREAT KINGDOMS OF AVALON WAGED BITTER WAR NOW TWO SCIONS OF THOSE DYNASTIES, PRINCE ETHAN OF THE HERON KINGDOM AND PRINCESS ASHLEIGH OF THE RAVEN KINGDOM HAVE FORCED PEACE UPON THE LANDS

LOVERS DESPITE THEIR HERITAGE, ETHAN AND ASHLEIGH HAVE CREATED AN ISLAND SANCTUARY FOR THE DOWNTRODDEN. IT IS A PLACE THEY TOO CALL HOME. A PLACE WHERE THEY BEGIN THE NEXT CHAPTER OF THEIR LIVES TOGETHER

Legion

"Of Kings and Memories Lost"

GLITTERING IN THE MORNING SUNLIGHT, THE HERON KINGDOM'S SEAT OF POWER PERCHES HIGH UPON A CLIFF OVERLOOKING THE GREAT SEA. ALL APPEARS WELL IN THE GLORIOUS SETTING KING DANE, RECENTLY RETURNED FROM RAVEN LANDS, AGAIN SITS UPON THE HERON THRONE. BUT APPEARANCES ARE FAR DIFFERENT FROM REALITY



UNKNOWN TO THE NOBLES OF HIS LAND, DANE HAS BEEN STRIPPED OF ALL MEMORY. HE'S KING IN NAME ONLY, STRUGGLING TO REMEMBER THE SIMPLEST DETAILS OF HIS RULE.

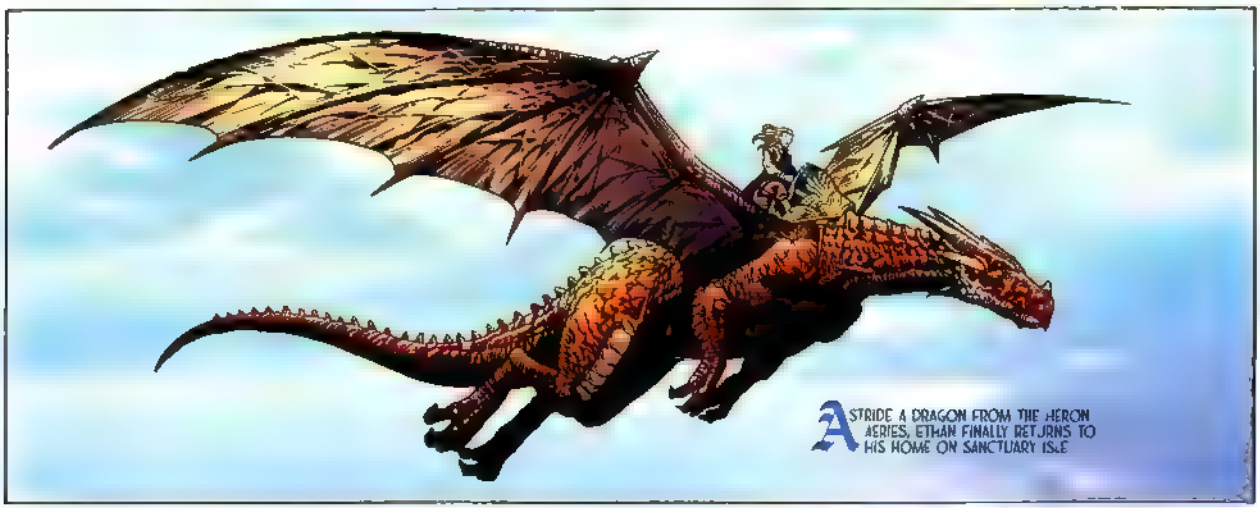
QUEEN MARIELLA HAS DECREED THAT HER HUSBAND'S CONDITION BE KEPT SECRET, SO THE SUBJECTS OF THE KINGDOM DO NOT LOSE CONFIDENCE IN THEIR MONARCH. THUS FAR, THE PRECARIOUS RUSE HAS BEEN SUSTAINED.

THE ROYAL CHILDREN, KAI AND YLENA, WONDER IF THEIR FATHER IS UP TO THE TASK, PARTICULARLY WITH AN INVASION FROM THE FAR KINGDOM OF TIGRIS LOOMING.

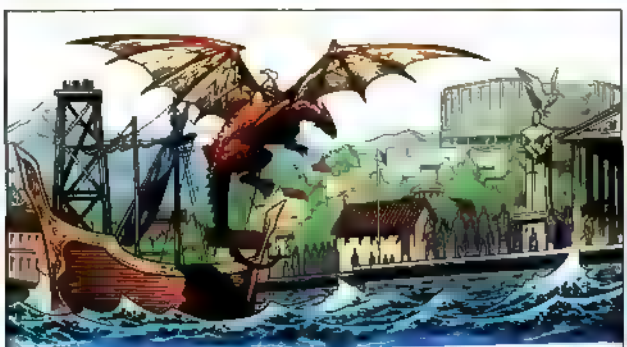
NEXT: "HOMECOMING"

Scion

"Homecoming"



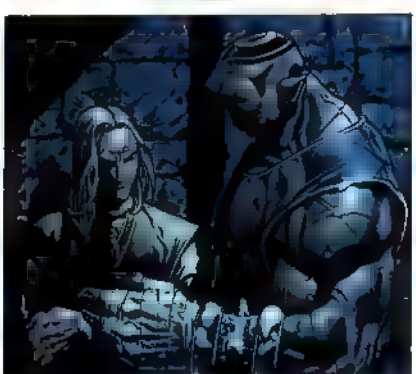
Astride a dragon from the heron aeries, Ethan finally returns to his home on Sanctuary Isle



A contingent of the island's lesser races inhabitants turns out to greet the architect of their freedom. Ethan is grateful for the welcome and pleased to be reunited with his fellows, especially his comrades Skink and Exeter.

More than any other, though, it is Ashleigh who has occupied Ethan's thoughts during his absence. But the lover's reunion must be brief. Ethan calls a meeting of the island's residents, to whom he must deliver troubling news.

Ethan explains that war with Tigris impends, and Sanctuary Isle likely will be caught up in the conflict. The freedom for which they so valiantly fought must be defended.



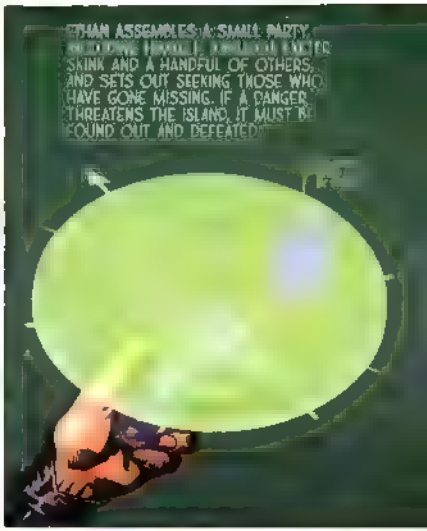
Once the message has been delivered, Exeter, Ethan's trusted lieutenant, apprises him of another disturbing development.

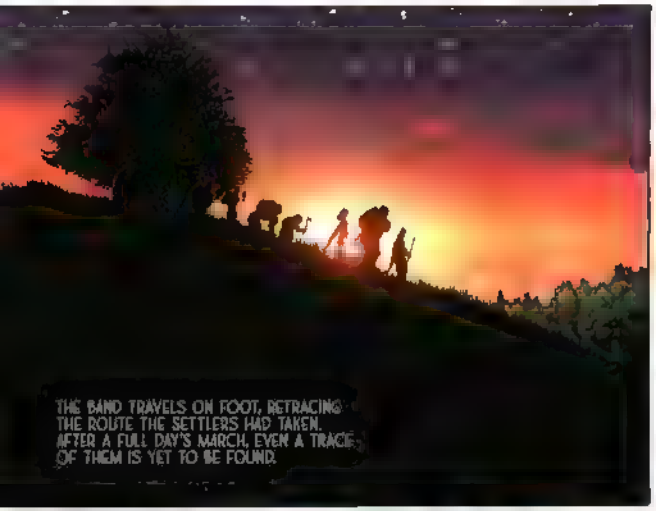
Next: "The Journey Begins"

Scion

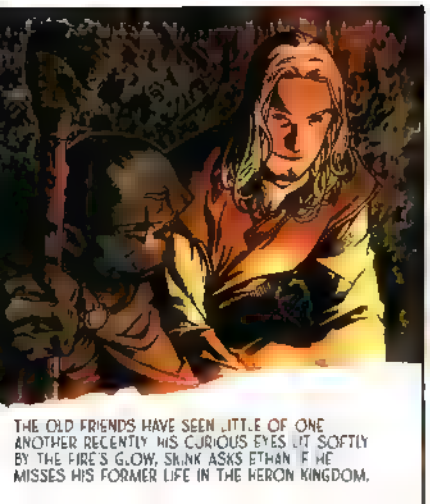
"The Journey Begins"

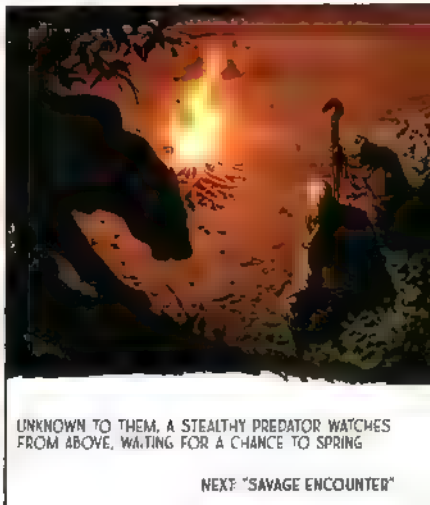
EXETER RELATED H S TALE
"A GROUP OF SETTLERS JOURNEYED SOUTH, INTENDING TO ESTABLISH ANOTHER TOWN ON THE ISLAND'S OPPOSITE SHORE. THERE HAS BEEN NO WORD SINCE. I HAVE KEPT THIS NEWS SECRET, BUT I FEAR THE WORST."


ETHAN ASSEMBLES A SMALL PARTY, INCLUDING [illegible] EXETER SKINK AND A HANDFUL OF OTHERS, AND SETS OUT SEEKING THOSE WHO HAVE GONE MISSING. IF A DANGER THREATENS THE ISLAND, IT MUST BE FOUND OUT AND DEFEATED.


THE BAND TRAVELS ON FOOT, RETRACING THE ROUTE THE SETTLERS HAD TAKEN. AFTER A FULL DAY'S MARCH, EVEN A TRACE OF THEM IS YET TO BE FOUND.

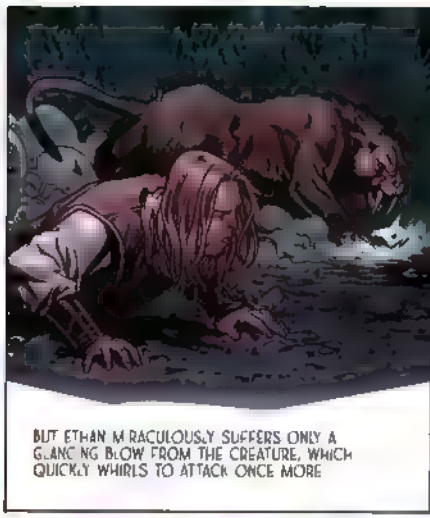
ONCE THE LAST OF THE SUN DIPS BELOW THE HORIZON, ETHAN CALLS A HALT AND THE TRAVELERS MAKE CAMP FOR THE EVENING. THE RESPITE ALLOWS ETHAN TO SHARE A FEW MOMENTS WITH SKINK, HIS CLOSEST FRIEND SINCE CHILDHOOD.


THE OLD FRIENDS HAVE SEEN LITTLE OF ONE ANOTHER RECENTLY. HIS CURIOUS EYES LIT SOFTLY BY THE FIRE'S GLOW, SKINK ASKS ETHAN IF HE MISSES HIS FORMER LIFE IN THE HERON KINGDOM.

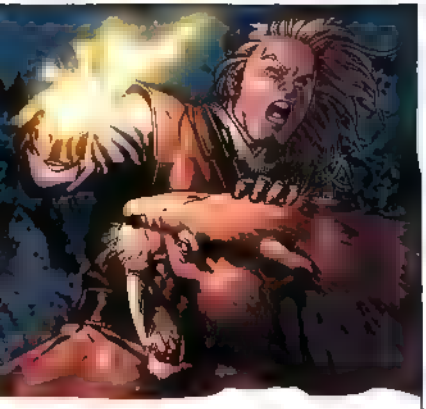


Scion

"Savage Encounter"



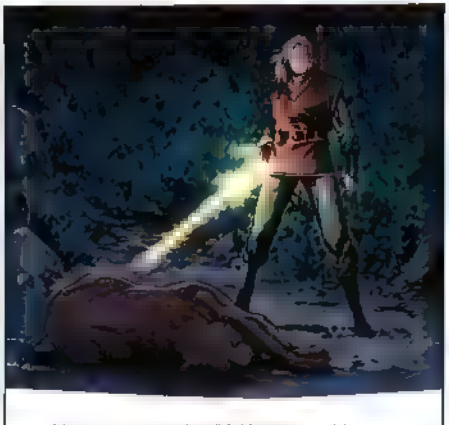
But Ethan miraculously suffers only a glancing blow from the creature, which quickly whirls to attack once more



The reprieve allows Ethan the barest of moments to summon the mysterious power within him

He meets the cat's charge with one of his own, his sword of pure energy a match for the razor tipped claws and deadly fangs. The battle's speed is equaled only by its ferocity, until Ethan manages to slip past the cat's guard

Forcing his blade through the thickly muscled neck, Ethan delivers a fatal blow



The lifeless cat slumps at his feet as Ethan's racing heart slows and his ragged breathing returns to normal. An urgent call from Ashleigh demands his attention

The creature's initial leap had been deflected by Sunk. Without Ethan ever realizing it, his friend's condition is grave

Next: "Mortal Wound"

Scion

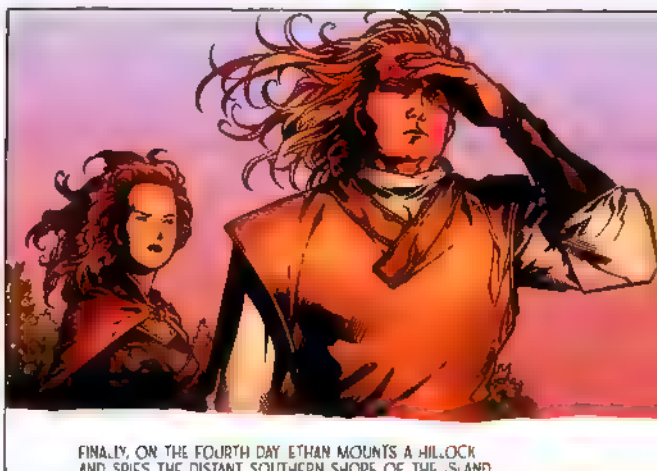
"Mortal Wound"

WHILE ASHLEIGH MINISTERS TO SKINK'S WOUNDS, ETHAN AND EXETER DISCUSS THEIR COMRADE'S GRIEVOUS CONDITION, WHICH REQUIRES MORE CARE THAN THEY CAN PROVIDE. A HARD DECISION MUST BE MADE. IT IS SKINK HIMSELF WHO INSISTS THE MISSION CONTINUE.

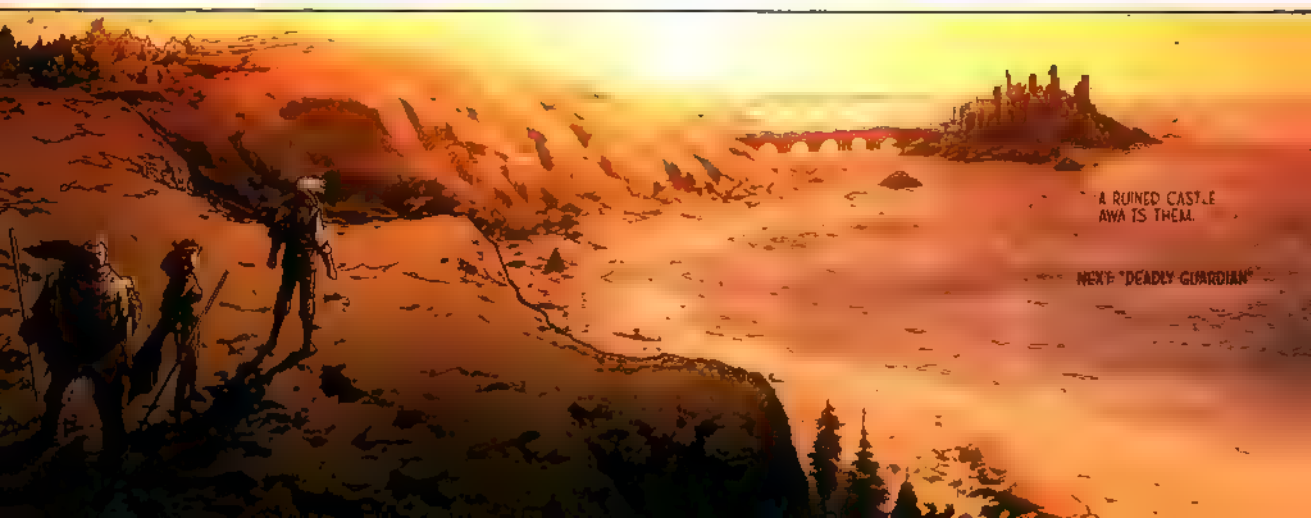
SKINK IS TO BE BORNE BACK TO THE HARBOR CITY, WHERE HIS INJURIES WILL BE TENDED. PROVIDED HE SURVIVES THE TRIP, AWARE THAT HE MAY NOT SEE SKINK ALIVE AGAIN, A HEAVY-HEARTED ETHAN BIDS HIS FRIEND FAREWELL.

AS SKINK'S LITTER DISAPPEARS IN THE DISTANCE, ASHLEIGH WONDERS IF A PRIDE OF SUCH CATS MIGHT HAVE BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SETTLERS' DISAPPEARANCE. BUT SURELY THE BEASTS WOULD HAVE LEFT SOME MANNER OF EVIDENCE.

THE ANSWER MUST STILL LIE AHEAD. THEIR NUMBERS REDUCED, THE TRAVELERS SET OUT ONCE AGAIN, KEEPING TO THE ROUTE THE SETTLERS HAD EXPECTED TO FOLLOW.



FINALLY, ON THE FOURTH DAY, ETHAN MOUNTS A HILLOCK AND SPIES THE DISTANT SOUTHERN SHORE OF THE ISLAND.

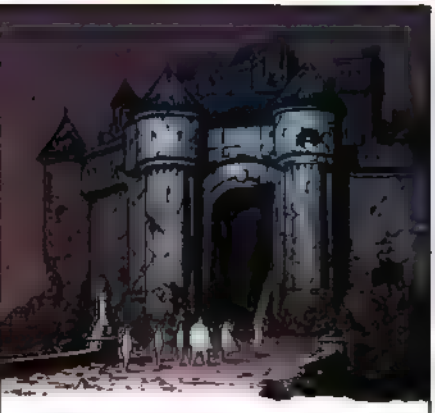


A RUINED CASTLE AWAITS THEM.

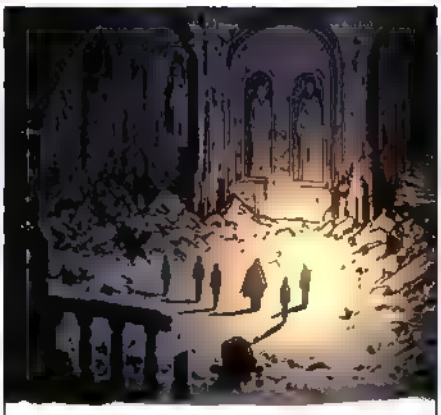
NEXT: "DEADLY GUARDIAN"

Scion

"Deadly Guardian"

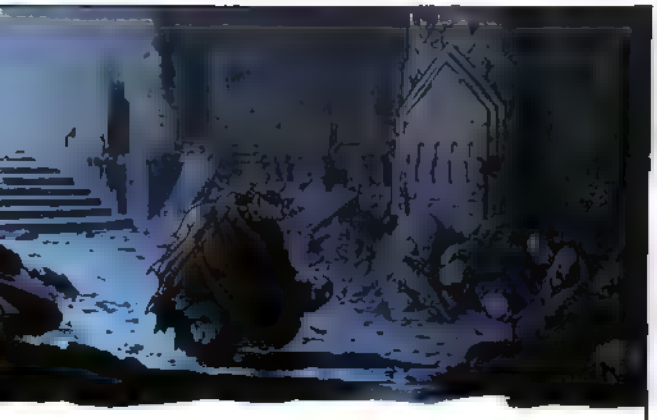


ETHAN LEADS HIS FELLOWS OVER A CAUSEWAY AND INTO THE CRUMBLING EDIFICE, A FORTRESS LEFT FROM THE DAYS WHEN THE TRUCE FIRST BROUGHT AN END TO RAVEN AND HERON HOSTILITIES.



THEIR FOOTSTEPS RING WITH OMINOUS ECHOES AS THEY ENTER THE GREAT HALL. WHAT ONCE MUST HAVE BEEN IMPRESSIVE IS NOW CHOKED WITH RUBBLE AND COATED IN THE DUST OF AGES.

"THEY WERE HERE," ETHAN ANNOUNCES AS HE GAZES UPON THE REMAINS OF A FIRE. THAT, AND A FEW SCATTERED BELONGINGS, ARE PROOF THE SETTLERS HAD CAMPED WITHIN THE FORTRESS.



IN AN ALCOVE A SHORT DISTANCE AWAY, EXETER MAKES A FAR MORE HORRIFIC DISCOVERY. THE BODIES OF ALL THE SETTLERS ARE STACKED IN CARELESS PILES, LIKE SO MUCH CORDWOOD.

BUT BEFORE HE CAN EXAMINE HIS GRIM FINDINGS, A FIERY TONGUE OF ENERGY LASHES DOWN FROM ABOVE, SEARING INTO THE FORMER BOUNTY HUNTER'S SHOULDER.

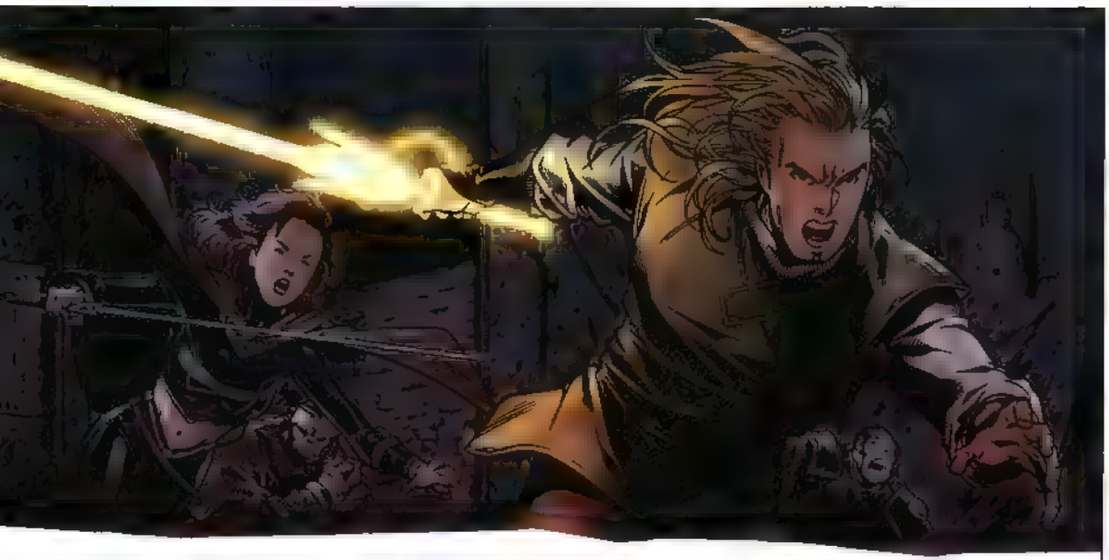
ETHAN AND ASHLEIGH TURN THEIR ATTENTION UPWARD, TOWARD A BALCONY WHERE THE ATTACK ORIGINATED.

THEY ARE UNPREPARED FOR WHAT CONFRONTS THEM...

NEXT: "ASHLEIGH ENDANGERED"

Scion

"Ashleigh Endangered"

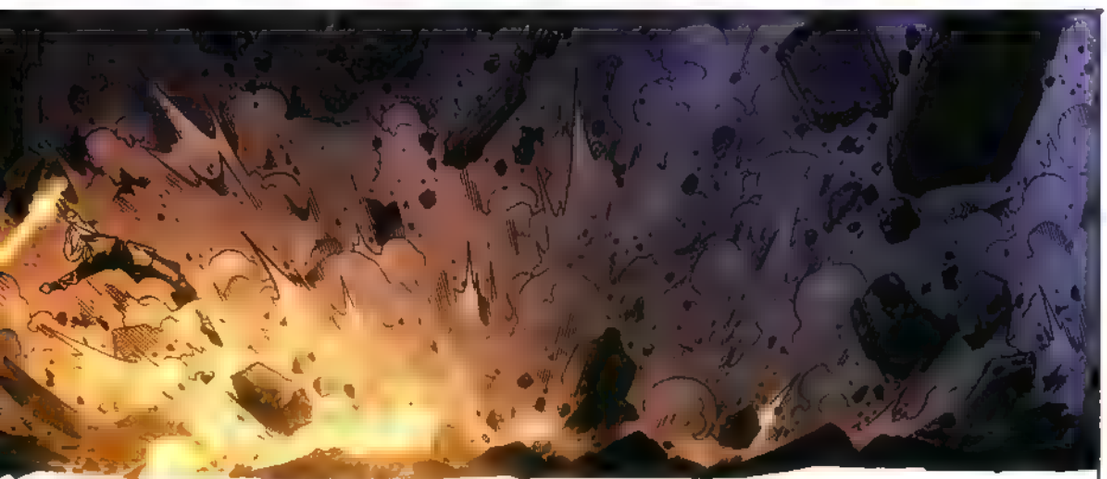


ETHAN AND ASHLEIGH SURGE TOWARD THEIR ATTACKER. ASHLEIGH DRAWS COLD STEEL, WHILE ETHAN'S BLADE SPRINGS TO BLAZING LIFE IN HIS HAND.

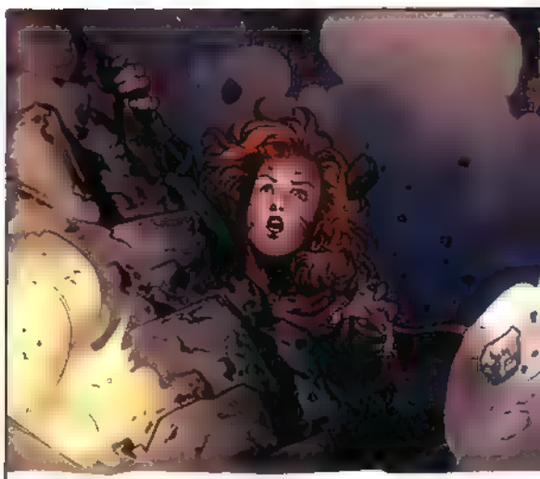
ABOVE, THE ARMORED FIGURE CONTINUES TO RAIN DOWN BRIGHT FIRE. IS HE THE FORTRESS' GUARDIAN? SIMPLY A MADMAN? BOTH?

THE SHEER FIREPOWER PREVENTING HIM FROM GETTING ANY CLOSER TO HIS OPPONENT'S POSITION, ETHAN DEFLECTS THE ATTACKER'S BARRAGE AS BEST HE CAN

THEN, UNLEASHING THE FULL MEASURE OF HIS MIGHT, ETHAN SUNDERS THE BALCONY'S ANCIENT SUPPORTS



THE BALCONY COLLAPSES WITH A DEAFENING ROAR, SMASHING DOWN WITH ENOUGH FORCE TO TEAR THROUGH THE GREAT HALL'S VERY FLOOR.

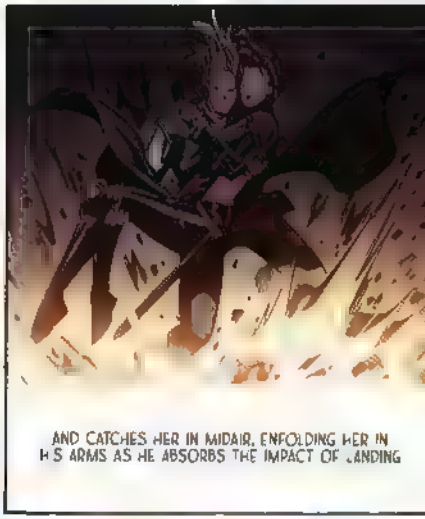


THE VEIL OF SMOKE AND DUST RISES, REVEALING ASHLEIGH HANGING BY THE MOST FRAGILE OF PURCHASES, ABOUT TO FALL TO HER DEATH!

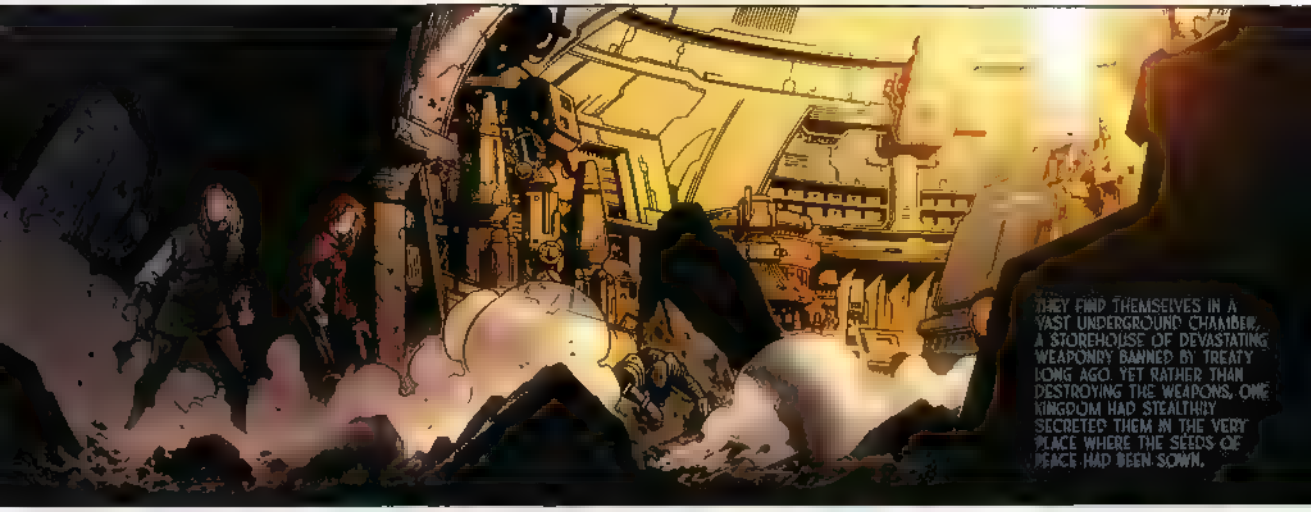
NEXT: "SECRETS REVEALED"

ETHAN IS TOO DISTANT TO DO ALIGHT BUT WATCH AS ASHLEIGH'S TENUOUS GRIP GIVES WAY AND SHE PLUNGES TOWARD THE DARKNESS BELOW

HE LEAPS INTO THE VOID AFTER HIS BELOVED...

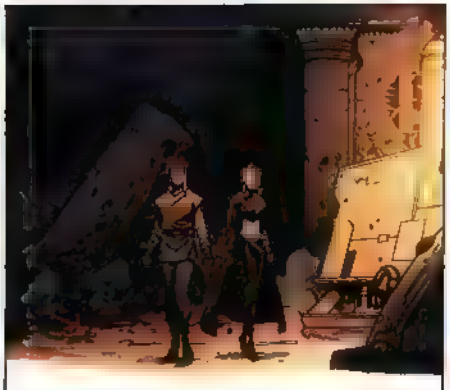


AND CATCHES HER IN MIDAIR, ENFOLDING HER IN HIS ARMS AS HE ABSORBS THE IMPACT OF LANDING

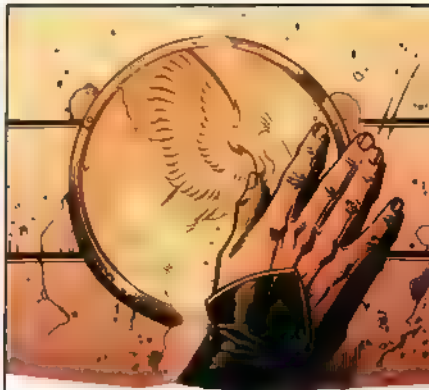


THEY FIND THEMSELVES IN A VAST UNDERGROUND CHAMBER, A STOREHOUSE OF DEVASTATING WEAPONRY BANNED BY TREATY LONG AGO. YET RATHER THAN DESTROYING THE WEAPONS, ONE KINGDOM HAD STEALTHILY SECRETED THEM IN THE VERY PLACE WHERE THE SEEDS OF PEACE HAD BEEN SOWN.

WITH HIS DYING BREATHS, THE GUARDIAN REVEALS HE HAD WATCHED OVER THE CACHE FOR CENTURIES. HIS LIFE EXTENDED BY THE SAME GENETICS THAT PRODUCED THE LESSER RACES, HE SLEW ANY WHO ENTERED THE FORTRESS



AS ETHAN AND ASHLEIGH SURVEY THE STOCKPILE, THE OBVIOUS SUSPICION REMAINS UNSPOKEN BETWEEN THEM. EACH ASSUMES IT IS ASHLEIGH'S ANCESTORS WHO ENGAGED IN THE SUBTERFUGE



YET WHEN ETHAN BRUSHES AWAY CENTURIES OF DUST, HE IS CONFRONTED WITH THE UNPLEASANT TRUTH.

NEXT: "FACING THE FUTURE"

Scion

"Facing the Future"

LEAVING BEHIND GUARDS TO STAND WATCH OVER THE WEAPONS, ETHAN, ASHLEIGH AND EXETER RETURN TO THE NORTH SIDE OF THE ISLAND UPON FLYING SKIDS DISCOVERED AMONG THE STOCKPILE.

THEY'RE GREETED BY A SIGHT THEY'D DARED NOT HOPE FOR. THOUGH HE DESCENDS A STAIRCASE WITH A SLOW, PAINED GAIT, SKINK'S WOUNDS HAVE HEALED WITH AMAZING SPEED.

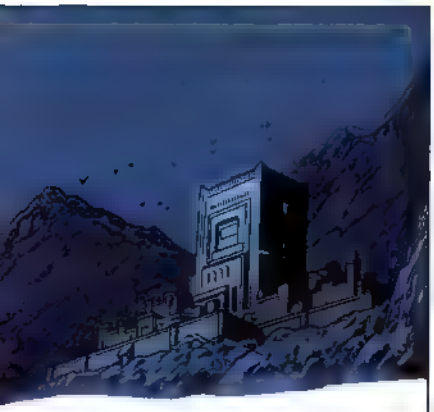
ETHAN IS OVERJOYED AT THE SIGHT OF HIS OLD FRIEND, STARTLING EVEN SKINK IN HIS DISPLAY OF AFFECTION. *"I'M HEARTIER THAN I LOOK,"* SKINK GENTLY REMINDS HIM.

THE LOVERS PONDER THE FUTURE, BALANCING THE PROMISE IT HOLDS AGAINST THE DANGERS IT HIDES. BUT EVEN AS ETHAN AND ASHLEIGH BASK IN THE SUNLIGHT, DARK CLOUDS BEGIN TO GATHER ON THE HORIZON.

NEXT: "THE HIDDEN MAN"

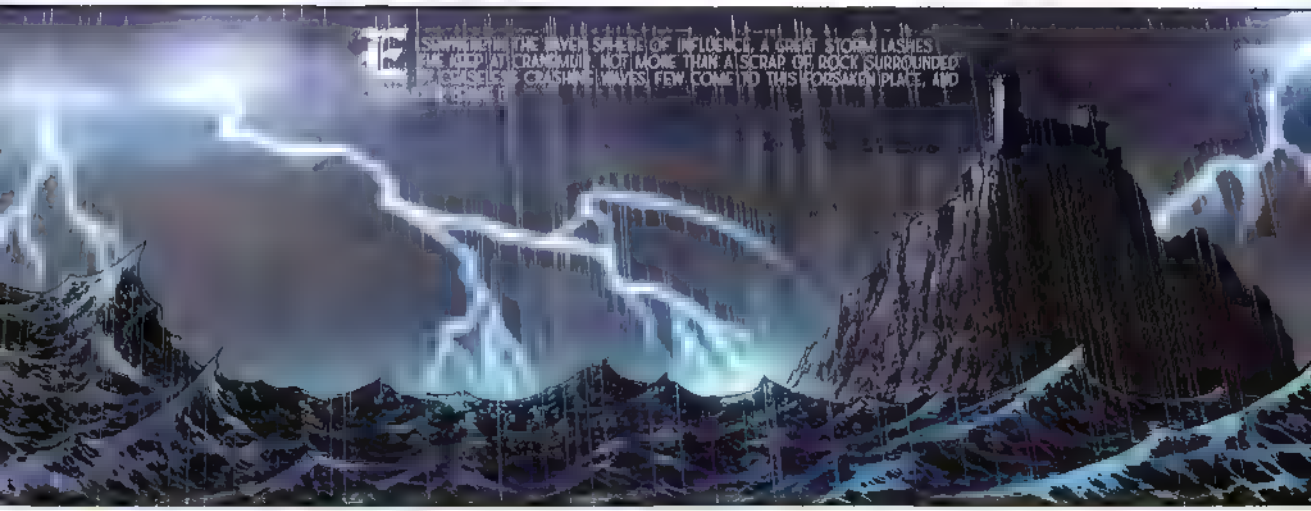
Scion

The Hidden Man



MEANWHILE, THE RAVEN CAPITAL SLEEPS UNDER THE WATCHFUL EYE OF A MONARCH WHO IS TRULY ITS ONCE AND FUTURE KING

THE OBSIDIAN THRONE NOW BELONGS TO KORT, WHO PERSONALLY DISPATCHED HIS VILLAINOUS BROTHER BRON AS PUNISHMENT FOR HIS MANY CRIMES. BUT THE HEAD THAT WEARS THE CROWN RESTS HARDLY AT ALL. MORE AND MORE OFTEN, KORT FINDS HIMSELF AWAKE DURING THE SMALL HOURS OF THE NIGHT, BROODING UPON WHAT HE HAS WROUGHT


IN THE SEVEN SPHERES OF INFLUENCE, A GREAT STORM LASHES
THE KEEP AT CRANEMUIL. NOT MORE THAN A SCRAP OF ROCK SURROUNDED
BY CASTLES & CRASHING WAVES, FEW COME TO THIS FORSAKEN PLACE, AND

HERE ARE IMPRISONED THE FOULEST OF CRIMINALS, THOSE WHOM THE THRONE WOULD HIDE FROM PRYING EYES AND ERASE FROM MEMORY

HERE THE PRISONERS ARE UNDER THE WATCH OF JAILERS WHOSE TONGUES HAVE BEEN CUT FROM THEIR HEADS TO PREVENT THEM FROM REVEALING WHAT THEY'VE SEEN

AND HERE, WITH ONLY HIS HATRED FOR COMPANY, ONE WHO WAS ONCE A KING SITS IN THE SHADOWS AND PLOTS

NEXT: "INVASION!"

THESE CHAPTERS ARE OVER. AND THOUGH THE TELLERS MAY CHANGE, THERE ARE TALES YET TO BE TOLD. THESE ARE MERE HINTS OF WHAT MAY COME TO PASS, AS THE STORY GOES EVER ON

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Guest INKER

Jason Keith
COLORIST

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LETTERER

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Production Assistants • **Marisol Quintana & Ron Domingue**

I've said on more than one occasion that turning a book over to a new team is a bit like giving up your child for adoption. You just hope the new "parents" take good care of your baby.

This is the last issue of SCION for Jim Cheung and me as we move on to other CrossGen projects. But in this case, we know our baby's going to be just fine as Ian Edginton, Luke Ross and John Dell take over, with Jason Keith staying on as colorist. We'd wish them luck, but having seen the work they've done on their first few issues, it's pretty obvious they don't need it.

Though we still had stories to tell, it seemed proper and fitting that Jim and I leave the book together. I've had fairly lengthy runs on a few titles, but none as satisfying as this one. Jim brought SCION to life, and while I enjoyed working with the various relief artists who spelled him, it was always Jim's art that made Avalon shine.

Personally, I feel incredibly fortunate to have worked with Jim, who came onto this book a damn good penciler, and departs from it as one of the best in business. I was privileged to watch his artistic growth over these 39 issues, and blessed to have him bring my stories to life. I've never worked with anyone better. I doubt I ever will.

We're indebted to Don Hillsman II, who was with us every step of the way (look for Don's inks over on MERIDIAN), colorists Caesar Rodriguez, Justin Ponsor and Jason Keith, and letterers Dave Lanphear and Troy Peteri. And, of course, we're indebted to you readers. Hope you stick around to see what comes next. I know I will.

— Ron Marz

pencils by Steve McNiven
inks by Tom Simmons
colors by Justin Ponsor

KEY ISSUE

CrossGen

40

NOV

SCION®

DEADSHOT

crossgen.com

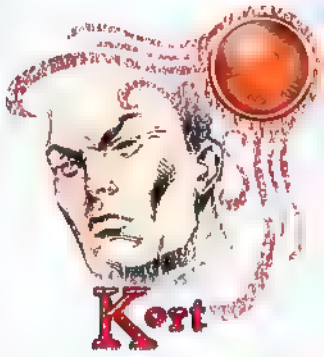
Ian Edginton
Luke Ross
John Dell
Jason Keith

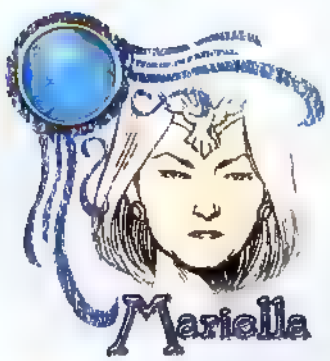
Thus Far in Scion

What started with a mysterious sigil resulted in war. Prince Ethan of the West-ruling Heron Dynasty was graced with a mark granting him power, leading to the accidental scarring of Prince Bron of the East-ruling Raven Dynasty during ritual combat.

War between the kingdoms followed, but as the conflict raged, Ethan pledged his loyalty to the Underground movement dedicated to freeing the genetically engineered Lesser Races. His companion in this was Ashleigh, Raven princess and sister to Bron. Eventually the two gave in to their mutual attraction and became lovers.

Ethan and a small band of followers, including his sidekick Skink and the bounty hunter Exeter, took control of an island and made it a Sanctuary for the Lesser Races. Ethan then used his power to end the war.





While Bron returned to Raven lands and reclaimed the Obsidian Throne, Ethan and Ashleigh journeyed to the far kingdom of Tigris in hopes of striking a treaty. But the true intentions of Tigris were laid bare - conquest of the Raven and Heron kingdoms. Ethan and Ashleigh escaped but Ethan returned home too late to stop the arranged marriage of his sister Ylena to Bron.

Ethan discovered his "father" was in fact Bron's disguised ally Mai Shen and the marriage part of a larger plot. Ethan slew Mai Shen and Bron was struck down by his long-suffering brother Kort. Ethan, Kai and Ylena finally found their missing father in a remote village, but he'd been stripped of his memories. Meanwhile, the mighty Tigris war machine is now poised to strike at both empires.

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HOUSE HERON HOUSE RAVEN. IT IS FROM *THESE* GREAT EMPIRES THAT OUR *FOREBEARS* CAME - *DISSIDENTS* AND *OUTCASTS* ALL.
THOUGH BORN TO *OPPOSING* CREEDS, THEY WERE YET SINGULAR OF MIND AND PURPOSE— THAT THE CREATION OF LESSER RACES DESTINED TO LIVE AND DIE IN *SERVITUDE*— WAS AN *ABOMINATION!*
SO OUR ANCESTORS JOURNEYED *EAST,* TOWARDS THE SUNRISE AND THE *BIRTH* OF A *NEW* WAY OF LIFE.
TO THIS END, *WE* WERE GIVEN FORM. SERVITORS OF *METAL,* NOT *FLESH.* NO NEED FOR THE YOKE AND LASH, IT WAS OUR NATURE, THE VERY *CORE* OF OUR BEING, TO ACCOMMODATE OUR MASTERS' *NEEDS.* TO PROVIDE *PERFECTION.*
BUT IF HISTORY TEACHES US *ANYTHING,* IT IS THAT MEN ARE *PREY* TO THEIR *PASSIONS*

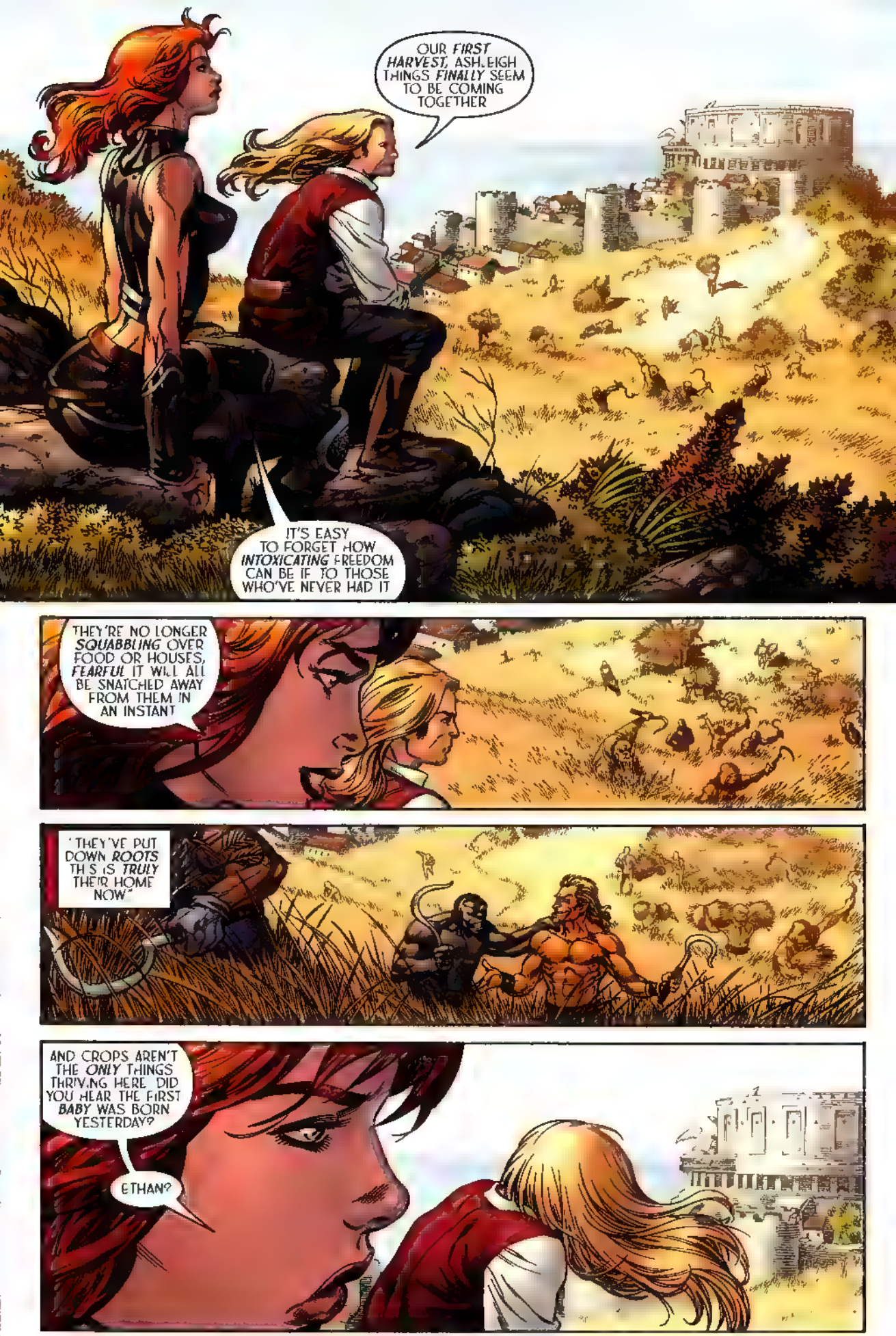
THEIR OLD *ENMITIES* RAN *DEEP* THEY FOUGHT AMONGST THEMSELVES UNTIL *FINALLY* DECIDING THAT *WE*, THEIR *IMPARTIAL* AIDES, SHOULD *ARBITRATE* AND KEEP THE PEACE AND SO IT HAS BEEN FOR *FIVE* CENTURIES

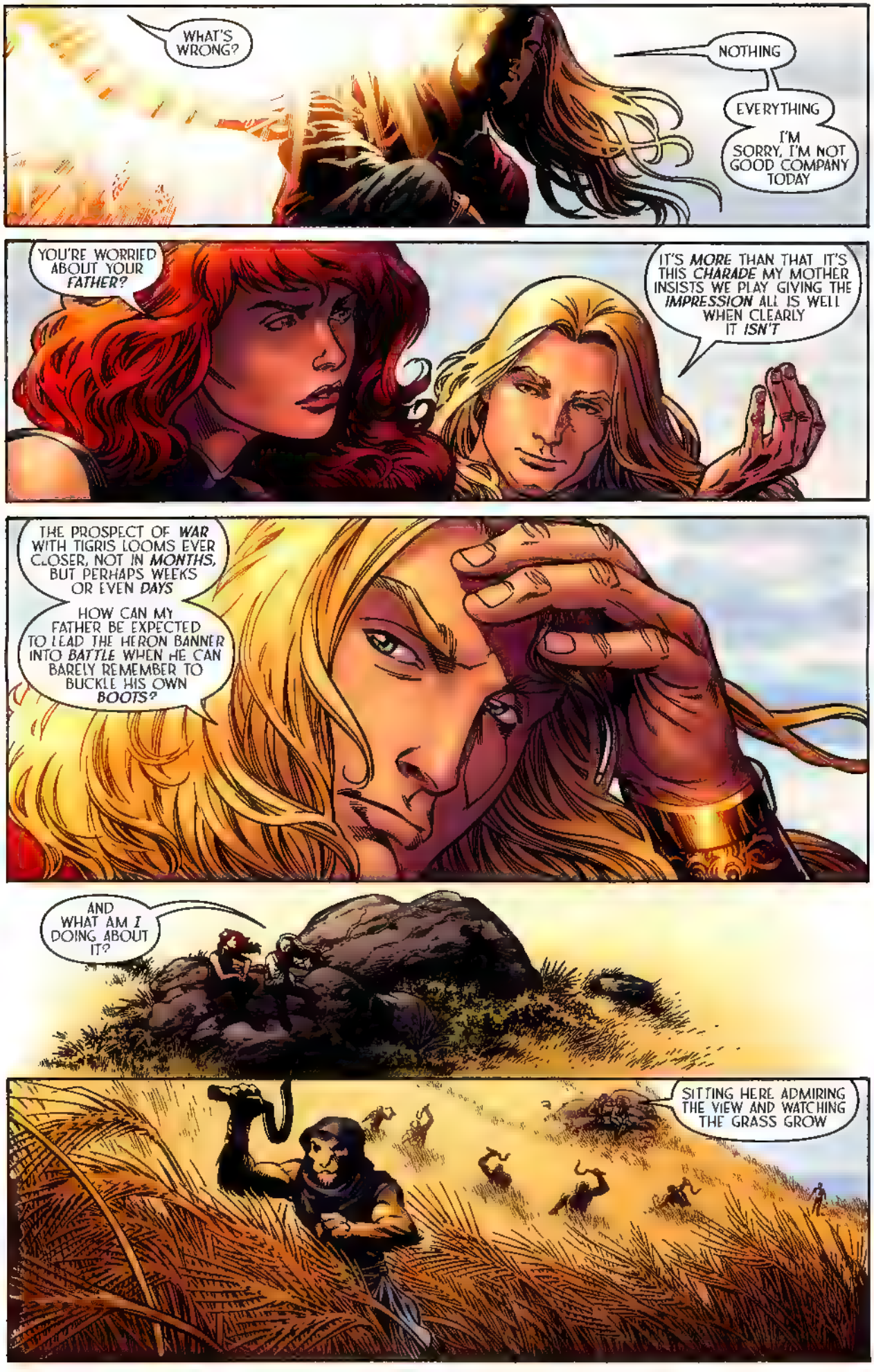
THE TIME HAS NOW COME TO *EXTEND* OUR PHILOSOPHY, TO *EMBRACE* OUR FOUNDERS' *TROUBLED* KIN

WE WERE *ENCOURAGED* BY THE HERON PRINCE ETHAN, AND HIS RAVEN *CONSORT*, PRINCESS ASHLEIGH, IN THEIR *EMANCIPATION* OF THE SLAVE RACES

COVERT OVERTURES WERE MADE IN THE HOPE *THEY* WOULD BECOME OUR *ALLIES* HOWEVER, THEY *VEHEMENTLY* REFUSED TO ACCEPT *ENLIGHTENMENT*

PERHAPS THEY *AND* THE KINGDOMS OF THEIR FATHERS WILL BE MORE RECEPTIVE WHEN THEY ARE ON THEIR *KNEES*.


OUR FIRST HARVEST, ASH-LEIGH THINGS FINALLY SEEM TO BE COMING TOGETHER
IT'S EASY TO FORGET HOW INTOXICATING FREEDOM CAN BE IF TO THOSE WHO'VE NEVER HAD IT
THEY'RE NO LONGER SQUABBLING OVER FOOD OR HOUSES, FEARFUL IT WILL ALL BE SNATCHED AWAY FROM THEM IN AN INSTANT
"THEY'VE PUT DOWN ROOTS THIS IS TRULY THEIR HOME NOW."
AND CROPS AREN'T THE ONLY THINGS THRIVING HERE. DID YOU HEAR THE FIRST BABY WAS BORN YESTERDAY?
ETHAN?


WHAT'S WRONG?
NOTHING
EVERYTHING
I'M SORRY, I'M NOT GOOD COMPANY TODAY
YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT YOUR *FATHER?*
IT'S *MORE* THAN THAT. IT'S THIS *CHARADE* MY MOTHER INSISTS WE PLAY GIVING THE *IMPRESSION* ALL IS WELL WHEN CLEARLY IT *ISN'T*
THE PROSPECT OF *WAR* WITH TIGRIS LOOMS EVER CLOSER, NOT IN *MONTHS*, BUT PERHAPS WEEKS OR EVEN *DAYS*
HOW CAN MY FATHER BE EXPECTED TO LEAD THE HERON BANNER INTO *BATTLE* WHEN HE CAN BARELY REMEMBER TO BUCKLE HIS OWN *BOOTS?*
AND WHAT AM *I* DOING ABOUT IT?
SITTING HERE ADMIRING THE VIEW AND WATCHING THE GRASS GROW

Oh, I DON'T KNOW THE VIEW FROM HERE LOOKS PRETTY *GOOD* TO ME

ASHLEIGH

Shush

WHAT *ARE* THEY?

SHIPS

TIGRIS WARSHIPS! THE INVASION'S *BEGUN!*

HOW IS THIS *POSSIBLE?* HOW COULD AN *ARMADA* LIKE THIS BREACH OUR AIRSPACE *UNDETECTED?*

THEY CAME IN FROM *ABOVE* OUR SENSOR NET, KING KORT, DESCENDED FROM *HIGH ORBIT* BARELY MINUTES AGO!

SO THE TIGRIS *WAR MACHINE* IS ON THE MOVE WE'VE *KNOWN* THIS DAY WAS COMING

BUT SIRE, OUR FORCES ARE *SORELY DIMINISHED!*

WE ARE STILL *RE ARMING* AFTER THE HERON CONFLICT

THEY CHOSE THEIR MOMENT *UNCANNILY* WELL

IF THEY DO HAVE SUB-ORBITAL FLIGHT, *SPYING* UPON US UNSEEN WOULD HAVE BEEN *CHILD'S PLAY*

HIGHNESS! *MULTIPLE* SIGNALS ARE BREAKING AWAY FROM THE MOTHER SHIPS, TARGETING THE CAPITAL ON AN ATTACK VECTOR

SO IT *BEGINS*

"...WAR."

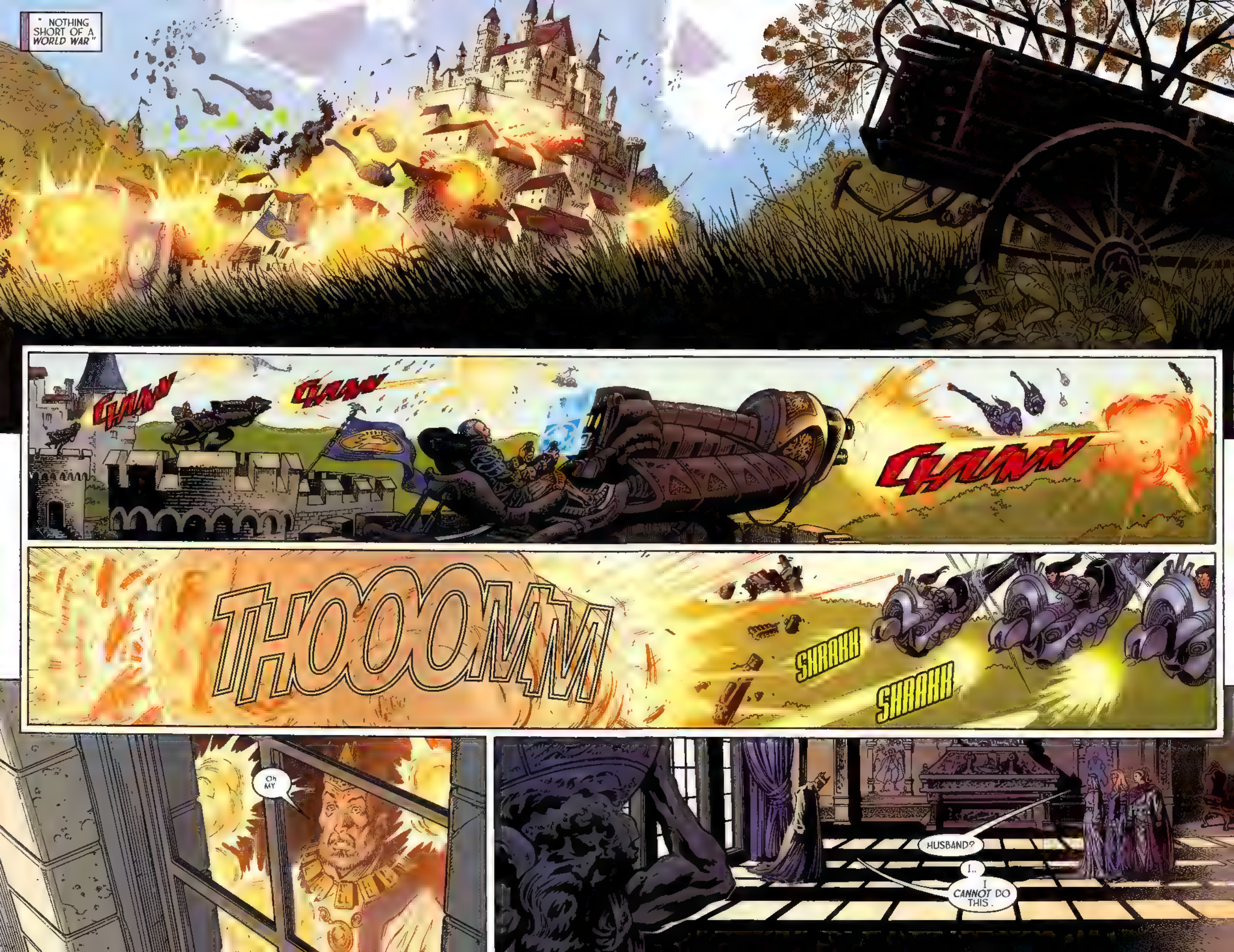
SHATT

THA KOOM
"THEIR FIGHTERS ARE SINGLING OUT OUR SENSOR NET AND VOX RELAY TOWERS.
" SEVERING OUR LINES OF COMMUNICATION!"
WHY AREN'T WE DAMN WELL FIGHTING BACK? WHERE'S THE AIR CAVALRY?
ALL SQUADRONS ON STANDBY HAVE LAUNCHED FROM THEIR AERIES

", THEY'RE ENGAGING THE ENEMY!"
FORWARD!

FWOOSH
NO!
SWOOSH
AAAHHH!

"IT'S NO GOOD, SIRE.
WE'RE OUTNUMBERED TEN TO ONE AT LEAST I'VE SUMMONED THE RESERVES FROM THE OUTLYING DISTRICTS, BUT I FEAR EVEN THEY WON'T BE SUFFICIENT.
THEN WE MUST SEND WORD TO THE HERON KINGDOM FOR ASSISTANCE KING DANE WILL HEED OUR CALL
THE FLEDGLING PEACE BETWEEN OUR NATIONS WILL BE TESTED IN THE HEAT OF BATTLE!
YOUR HIGHNESS, THE HERONS ARE ALREADY INVOLVED, FOR THEY ARE BEING ATTACKED JUST AS WE ARE!
THIS IS A CONFLICT BEING FOUGHT ON TWO FRONTS, ON TWO CONTINENTS.


" NOTHING SHORT OF A WORLD WAR"
CHUNN
CHUNN
CHUNN
THOOOMM
SHRAKK
SHRAKK
Oh MY
HUSBAND?
I..
I CANNOT DO THIS.

WHAT'S MORE, I *WILL* NOT
NO MATTER *WHO* I ONCE WAS, I AM ONLY A *PLAYER* KING NOW THIS NATION NEEDS A LEADER OF TRUE METTLE AND FORTITUDE
KAI
. SON
PLEASE *TAKE THIS* FROM ME ITS *WEIGHT* IS MORE THAN I CAN BEAR
FATHER, YOU ARE *MISTAKEN* THIS IS NOT A BURDEN YOU *ALONE* MUST SHOULDER.
WE ARE *ALL* WITH YOU JUST AS *YOU* MUST BE THERE FOR OUR *PEOPLE*
KAI IS RIGHT THE LAND NEEDS ITS KING. THE PEOPLE DRAW *STRENGTH* FROM THE STABILITY AND CONTINUITY OF THE ROYAL LINE
IF *WE FALTER*, SO DO *THEY*

MARIELLA?
THERE IS *TRUTH* IN WHAT KAI AND YLENA SAY, MY LOVE. I BELIEVED THIS RUSE WAS *NECESSARY*, BUT I WILL NOT *FORCE* YOU
YOU MUST DO WHAT *YOU* FEEL IS RIGHT, DANE
THEN LET RIGHT BE *DONE*
KAI.
YES, MY FATHER
MY CAPTAIN
MY *KING*
MY CHILDREN

IT'S BEEN EIGHT HOURS SINCE THE TIGRIS ARMADA *DISPERSED*. HALF FLYING FOR *HERON* SHORES
AND HALF FOR *RAVEN*, WITH NO WORD FROM *EITHER*
EXETER, WHAT NEWS?
NONE. THAT'S *GOOD*
THE HERON AND RAVEN VOX TOWERS AREN'T BEING *JAMMED*, ETHAN, THEY'VE BEEN *DESTROYED*.
DISRUPTING COMMUNICATION, CREATING CONFUSION AND DISARRAY AMONGST YOUR ENEMIES. IT'S A CLASSIC PRECURSOR TO *INVASION*
ASHLEIGH, IF YOU WISH TO RETURN HOME, FIGHT *ALONGSIDE* YOUR BROTHER, YOU NEED NOT STAY FOR ME
I STAY BECAUSE I *WISH* TO. MY HOME IS WHEREVER *YOU* ARE

LOOK *THERE*, OUT TO SEA, CRESTING THE HORIZON.
SHIPS. SHIPS BY THE *SCORE!*
"IT'S A WHOLE *FLOTILLA*, AND HEADING THIS WAY!"
SO THAT'S *WHY* THOSE WARSHIPS PASSED US OVER *UNMOLESTED*. THE KHANATE MHINDA *STILL* HAS HER GAZE FIXED ON TOURNAMENT ISLE AS HER BASE OF OPERATIONS.
BUT THE ANSWER *NOW* IS THE SAME AS IT WAS BACK THEN IN TIGRIS .

NEVER!

CREATORS

IAN EDGINTON
BORN: Birmingham, England.
WEAPON OF CHOICE: pen and paper
INFLUENCES: Alan Moore, Grant Morrison, Mike Mignola, Eddie Campbell, James Sturm, Jacques Tardi, Bob Fingerman, Tom Raney, Kim Newman, Cornell Woolrich, Donald Westlake/Richard Stark
PAST WORK: Terminator, Aliens, Predator, Xena, Star Trek, Batman, X-Men, Wolverine, Vampirella, Conan, The Establishment, Scarlet Traces, Leviathan, Red Seas and of course SOJOURN and SCION!

LUKE ROSS
BORN: Sao Paolo, Brazil
WEAPON OF CHOICE: A #2 pencil
SCHOOLING: Self taught
INFLUENCES: John Romita Jr., Ross Andru, John Buscema, Milo Manara, Watson Portela, Mozart Couto
PAST TRIUMPHS: JLA, Spectacular Spider-Man, New Gods, American Century, Uncanny X-Men

JOHN DELL
BORN: Kenner, Louisiana
WEAPON OF CHOICE: A brush. A Raphael #3 to be exact.
SCHOOLING: Jedi Inking Academy
INFLUENCES: Michael Golden, Joe Sinnott, Terry Austin and anyone who did comics in the 1980s
PAST TRIUMPHS: JLA, Damon, Labo, MYSTIC, [illegible]

JASON KEITH
BORN: Wichita, Kansas
WEAPON OF CHOICE: Photoshop 5.5
INFLUENCES: Richard Isanove, Justin Ponsor, Brian Stelfreeze, John William Waterhouse, N. C. Wyeth.
PAST TRIUMPHS: With Wi Fi Studio worked on Uncanny X-Men, New X-Men, GI Joe, Lady Death, Nightcrawler mini-series.

TROY PETERI
BORN: Milwaukee, WI
WEAPON OF CHOICE: Adobe Illustrator
INFLUENCES: John Workman, Dave Lanphear, the guys from Comicraft
PAST TRIUMPHS: Amazing Spider-Man, Iron Man and Daredevil

The CrossGen Universe created by Mark Alessi & Gina M. Villa

Book Redesign by RANDY MARTIN

PAGE 13:
PANEL 1:
High over the city, [illegible] towards us are Raven-Air Cavalry. These are the black-bodied, red-winged beasts we've seen at the end of Issue #s 152-153 in the first TBP. The front rider is pointing forward with his sword, leading the charge.

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Scion
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Luke Ross
John Dell
Jason Keith

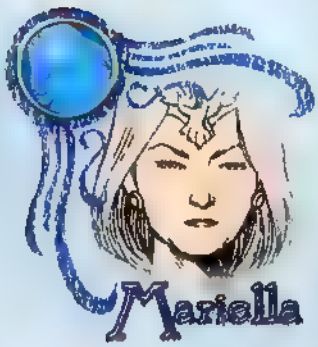
Thus Far in Scion

What started with a mysterious sigil resulted in war. Prince Ethan of the West-ruling Heron Dynasty was graced with a mark granting him power, leading to the accidental scarring of Prince Bron of the East-ruling Raven Dynasty during ritual combat.

War between the kingdoms followed, but as the conflict raged, Ethan pledged his loyalty to the Underground movement dedicated to freeing the genetically engineered Lesser Races. His companion in this was Ashleigh, Raven princess and sister to Bron. Eventually the two gave in to their mutual attraction and became lovers.

Ethan and a small band of followers, including his sidekick Skink and the bounty hunter Exeter, took control of an island and made it a Sanctuary for the Lesser Races. Ethan then used his power to end the war.

While Bron returned to Raven lands and reclaimed the Obsidian Throne, Ethan and Ashleigh journeyed to the far kingdom of Tigris in hopes of striking a treaty. But the true intentions of Tigris were laid bare – conquest of the Raven and Heron kingdoms. Ethan and Ashleigh escaped but Ethan returned home too late to stop the arranged marriage of his sister Ylena to Bron.



Ethan discovered his "father" was in fact Bron's disguised ally Mai Shen, and the marriage was part of a larger plot. Ethan slew Mai Shen and Bron seemingly was slain by his long-suffering brother Kort. Ethan, Kai and Ylena finally found their missing father in a remote village but he'd been stripped of his memories.

Ethan's troubled family reunion is short-lived as Tigris launches its long-anticipated onslaught against both Heron and Raven empires with devastating effect. To make matters worse, Tigris forces now approach Sanctuary Island.

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ETHAN
ETHAN, WHAT ARE YOUR ORDERS?
WE'LL DO WHAT WE'VE ALWAYS DONE

" WE SHALL STAND AND WE SHALL FIGHT!"

Ah, PRINCE ETHAN IT IS A PITY THAT WE MUST MEET AGAIN UNDER SUCH GRAVE CIRCUMSTANCES
HOWEVER, YOU DO REALIZE YOU ONLY HAVE YOURSELVES TO BLAME?
FOR WHAT?
REFUSING TO BETRAY OUR PEOPLE AND YIELD TO A NATION OF MACHINES WITH DELUSIONS OF GODHOOD?
IT IS NO DELUSION TO WANT PEACE AND EQUALITY FOR ALL, MY DEAR ASHLEIGH
YOU WOULD SEE THAT IF YOU WERE NOT BLINDED BY YOUR PAROCHIAL SELF-INTERESTS
AND WHAT OF FREE WILL?
WHAT OF SELF-DETERMINATION?
THEY ARE ILLUSIONS AND CONCEITS AT LEAST WE ARE HONEST ABOUT OUR DESTINY AND DESIGN FOR THE PEOPLE OF AVALON
A BENIGN TYRANNY IS INFINITELY PREFERABLE TO THE CULTURE OF BLOODSHED AND SLAVERY THAT HAS PREVAILED IN YOUR KINGDOMS FOR CENTURIES
WE ARE NOT PERFECT BUT WE SHALL SOLVE OUR OWN PROBLEMS. WE WILL NOT BE DICTATED TO!
WHETHER HERON RAVEN, OR LESSER RACE, WE SHALL RESIST YOU TO THE LAST!

SO BE IT
THE LAST IT IS
WE ARE ALL WITH YOU ETHAN, TO THE BITTER END
AYE.
BETTER TO DIE ON YOUR FEET THAN LIVE ON YOUR KNEES

ON MY COMMAND.

CHARGE!

NO QUARTER!
NO MERCY!

"HERON RESISTANCE IS CRUMBLING. RELAY TO TIGRIS COMMAND

SHRAKK

THEIR CAPITAL IS *OURS*.

OVER MY *DEAD* BODY!

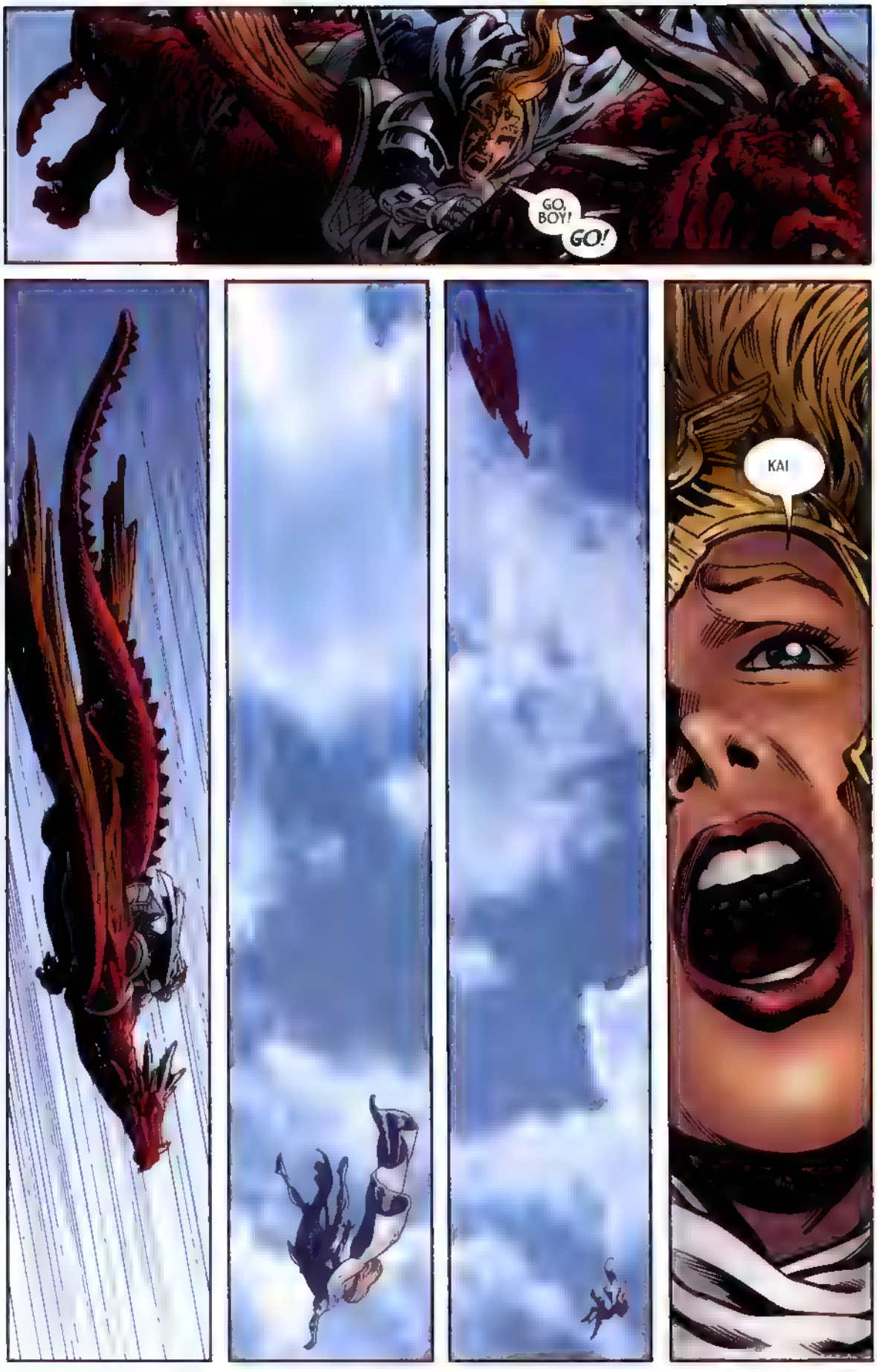
OR RATHER, *YOURS*!

SO END *ALL* THE ENEMIES OF THE HERON KINGDOM!

YLENA! YOUR FLANK!

SHRAKK

KAI!


GO, BOY!
GO!
KAI

SNFFF
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
AHUH HAH! HAH! HAH!
I AM NOW!
I CAN'T HOLD HIM!
SHRAVK
SHRAVK
RIEEE!
KRIEEE

KAI?
KAI!
Oh, MY KAI, CAN YOU HEAR ME?
YES STOP SHOUTING! I'M IN PAIN, BUT I'M NOT DEAF!
Uhh.. LIGHTS THE SKY IS FULL OF LIGHTS !
YOU'RE CONCUSSED LIE STILL
NO, REALLY! UP THERE LOOK!
THEIR FIGHTERS ARE PULLING BACK!
THEY'VE DONE THEIR WORK, SOFTENING US UP IT'S THE GROUND TROOPS' TURN NOW
THE PRELUDE'S OVER

" THE INVASION'S BEGUN!"

SIRE, THE CAPITOL HAS FALLEN YOU MUST LEAVE WHILE THERE IS STILL TIME

AND CONCEDE THE CITY? NEVER!

WITH RESPECT, HIGHNESS PRIDE WILL NOT WIN THIS WAR

THE ENEMIES FACTORY SHIPS CAN REPLENISH THEIR FORCES IN MERE HOURS YOU DO NOT HAVE THAT LUXURY

GENERAL RIGA IS CORRECT, YOUR MAJESTY

OUR GARRISONS UP-COUNTRY ARE INTACT IF WE WITHDRAW NOW, WE CAN FIGHT BACK USING GUERRILLA TACTICS

NO! I WILL NOT RUN SKULKING TO THE BACKWOODS LIKE SOME WRETCHED COWARD!
I SHALL STAND AND FIGHT, LIKE MY FATHER AND FOREBEARS HAVE DONE!
AND WILL YOU ALSO JOIN THEM IN THE GROUND?
DAMN YOUR IMPUDENCE, RIGA! I MAY NOT WEAR MY SCARS LIKE YOU AND GENERAL ZEIS, BUT I AM NO PERFUMED POSEUR EITHER!
DO YOU FORGET? I HAVE AVENGED MY FATHER
I DETHRONED MY TYRANT BROTHER!
I AM KING IN MY EVERY WORD AND DEED, AND I AM NOT ABOUT TO RELINQUISH THE THRONE TO A BUNCH OF WIND-UP WARRIORS!
SIRE, I'VE KNOWN YOU SINCE YOU WERE BUT KNEE HIGH. YOU'VE ALWAYS HAD A STRONG SENSE OF DUTY, BUT DON'T BE BLINDED BY IT NOW
THE RAVEN EMPIRE IS WHATEVER YOU ARE. THE PEOPLE NEED THEIR LEADER
THUNK

HIGHNESS! THE COMMAND COMPOUND HAS BEEN BREACHED!
THE ENEMY IS WITHIN THE WALLS!
BUILDINGS CAN BE REBUILT, BUT WITHOUT ITS *HEART*, WITHOUT THE *KING*, THE KINGDOM IS NOTHING!
YOU *MUST* LEAVE NOW!
"ALL IS LOST!"

WITHDRAW! WITHDRAW!!

BY ALL THAT'S HOLY! WHAT HAVE I DONE?!

WHAT YOU THOUGHT WAS RIGHT AND STILL IS

NO! I WAS TOO *PROUD*, TOO *ARROGANT*! IF I'D JUST LET THEM HAVE THE DAMN ISLAND THOSE FALLEN WOULD STILL BE ALIVE!

AND UNDER THE DOMINION OF TIGRIS! NO MATTER THEIR INTENT, THEIR FAUX BENEVOLENCE WHETHER IRON OR GOLD, A CAGE IS STILL A CAGE

WE CAN REGROUP, FIGHT FROM STREET TO STREET MAKE THEM PAY IN THEIR DEAREST BLOOD

YOU'RE FORGETTING ONE THING, EXETER

" THEY DON'T BLEED"
THEY'RE RETREATING SHOULD WE PURSUE AND FINISH THEM?
NO. THE DAMAGE IS DONE
THE YOUNG HERO HAS FAILED, HIS FOLLOWERS' FAITH IN HIM WILL BE SHAKEN
BESIDES, THIS IS AN ISLAND WHERE CAN THEY RUN TO?
KHANATE MHINDA WE CAME AS SUMMONED
YOU BOTH KNOW WHAT TO DO?
WE DO
GOOD. THEN BRING ME AVALON

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with Tom Ryder
Tom Simmons
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LETTERER

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FEB

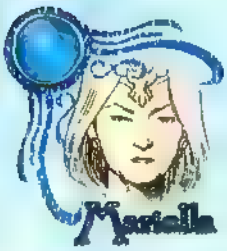
Scion

DEADSHOT

Ian Edginton
Sergio Cariello
Matt Ryan
Jason Keith

Previously In Scion®

During ritual combat with the Raven's Prince Bron, Prince Ethan of the Heron Dynasty was graced with a powerful sigil. The arrival of this mysterious mark caused Ethan to accidentally soar his rival, which led to renewed war between the kingdoms. Soon after, Ethan controversially sided with Raven Princess Ashleigh, and pledged his loyalty to the Underground movement, a rag-tag force dedicated to freeing the genetically engineered Lesser Races.



Founding a Sanctuary island for the emancipated slaves, Ethan then used his power to end the war. Later, Ethan and Ashleigh journeyed to the far kingdom of Tigris in hopes of striking a treaty, but Tigris demanded nothing less than total conquest of the Raven and Heron kingdoms. Ethan and Ashleigh escaped, but now the massed mechanoid army of Tigris has launched a merciless onslaught against both empires and Sanctuary Isle itself!

Ian Edginton
WRITER

Sergio Cariello
PENCILER

Matt Ryan
INKER

Jason Keith
COLORIST

Dave Lanphear
LETTERER

Cover by Sergio Cariello & Jason Keith

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YAAAHH!
SKRAGG

ETHAN! IT'S NO GOOD! WE *CAN'T* HOLD THEM! WE HAVE TO *WITHDRAW!*

NO! NO MORE *RUNNING!* WE *RAN* AT THE BEACH AND HAVE BEEN RETREATING *EVER* SINCE!

I WILL *NOT* LET THE CITY FALL!

IT *ALREADY* HAS ETHAN LOOK AROUND YOU WE *CANNOT* WIN THIS!

IT'LL TAKE *MORE* THAN WE'VE GOT TO *DEFEAT* THEM LIKE *THIS!* THERE ARE OTHER WAYS TO WIN A WAR BUT NOT *HERE* NOT *TODAY!*

VERY WELL, BUT THIS IS THE *LAST* TIME I WILL SHOW THE ENEMY MY *BACK*
TO ME! PULL BACK! *WITHDRAW!*
SHUMPF
WE'RE CUT OFF!

SO BE IT THE DIE IS CAST
WE STAY AND STAND!
DESTROY THEM ALL!
ETHAANNNN!
WHAT

SHRANNG

SKRANNG

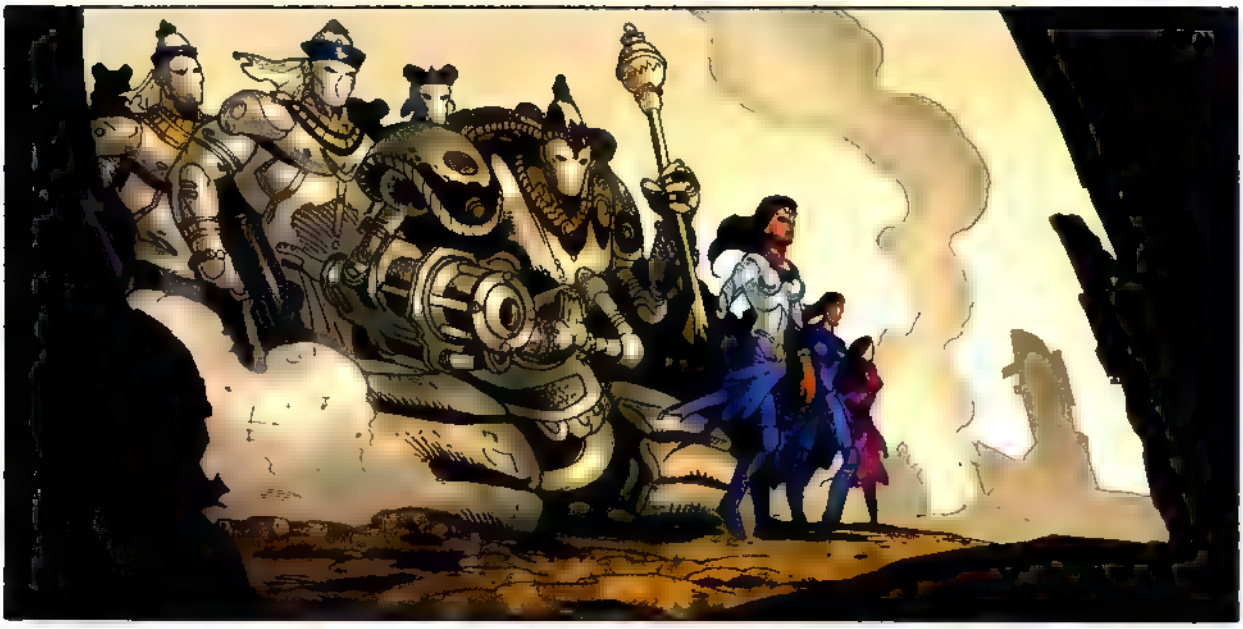
ROOAARRRGGH!!

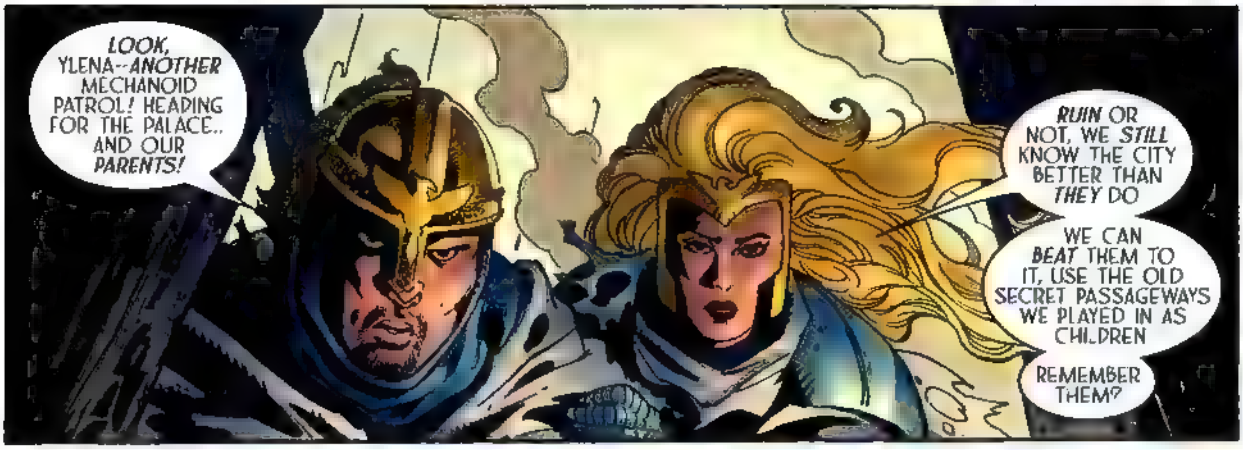
HOLD FAST! YOU ARE NOT ALONE!

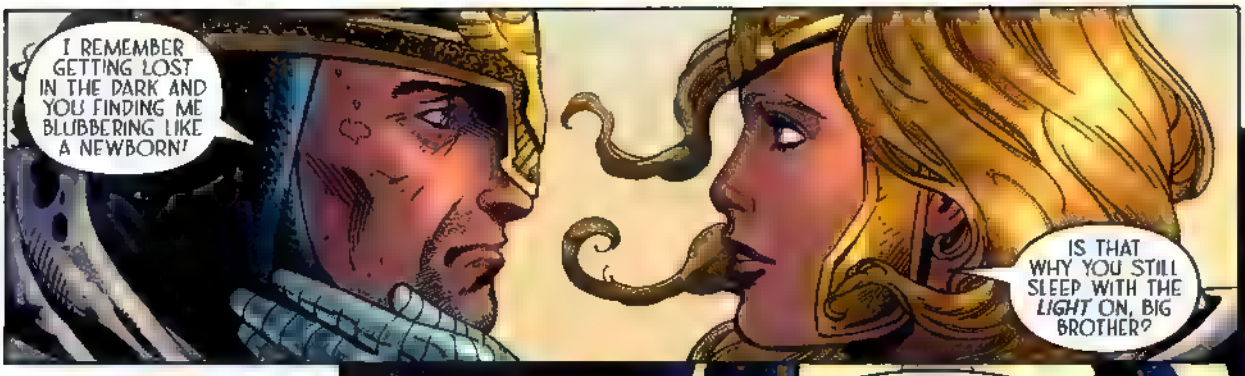
WE.L, DO YOU STILL WANT TO TURN TAIL?
ARE YOU KIDDING? AND MISS THE FUN?
THEN WHAT ARE WE WAITING FOR?
CHARRRGGGE!!
STRIKE HARD, IN SANCTUARY'S NAME!
LEAVE NONE STANDING!

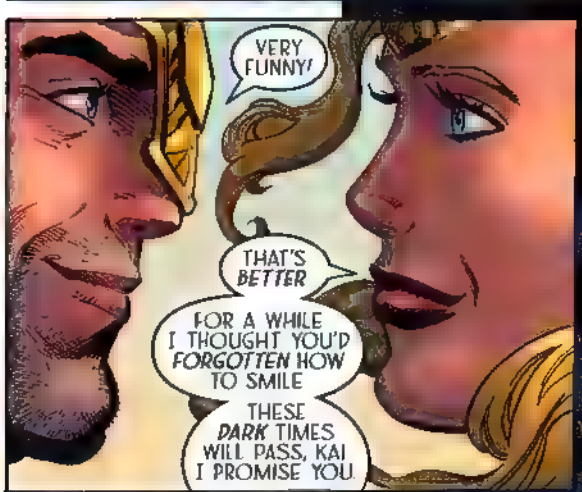
HKKK ZZZKK
SQUEEE!
SHUNK
THIS IS A WELCOME SURPRISE!
WHEN WORD CAME THAT TIGRIS HAD FIXED ITS EYE UPON THIS PLACE, WE KNEW WE HAD TO COME.
ESPECIALLY SINCE YOU HAD SHOWN US THE WAY.

IT IS ONE THING TO BE BEASTS OF BURDEN FOR MEN, BUT TO GO ON BENDED KNEE TO A MACHINE... PAH!
JANISSARIES! ETHAN KEEPS DANGEROUS COMPANY
WE CROSSED PATHS WITH THEM WHILE SEARCHING FOR HIS FATHER ETHAN OFFERED THEM SOMETHING THEY'D NOT HAD BEFORE
WHAT?
"HOPE"
I'M SORRY SANCTUARY ISLE ISN'T QUITE THE HAVEN I MADE IT OUT TO BE
FREEDOM IS NOTHING UNLESS IT IS WORTH FIGHTING FOR
THESE DAYS IT IS HARD WON INDEED THOUGH WITH A FEW MORE LIKE YOURSELF WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE
HOW MANY MORE?




LOOK, YLENA--ANOTHER MECHANOID PATROL! HEADING FOR THE PALACE.. AND OUR PARENTS!
RUIN OR NOT, WE STILL KNOW THE CITY BETTER THAN THEY DO
WE CAN BEAT THEM TO IT, USE THE OLD SECRET PASSAGEWAYS WE PLAYED IN AS CHILDREN
REMEMBER THEM?


I REMEMBER GETTING LOST IN THE DARK AND YOU FINDING ME BLUBBERING LIKE A NEWBORN!
IS THAT WHY YOU STILL SLEEP WITH THE LIGHT ON, BIG BROTHER?


VERY FUNNY!
THAT'S BETTER
FOR A WHILE I THOUGHT YOU'D FORGOTTEN HOW TO SMILE
THESE DARK TIMES WILL PASS, KAI I PROMISE YOU

YOU WANT TO SEE ME SMILE SOME MORE?
COME, LET'S DRIVE THE INFERNAL DEVICES FROM OUR SHORES AND I'LL SPEND THE REST OF MY DAYS GRINNING LIKE A FOOL!

OUR *CHILDREN* ARE OUT THERE, FIGHTING THE FOE! OUR *PEOPLE* ARE DYING DEFENDING THEIR HOMES!

AND WHAT AM I DOING? *NOTHING!*

YOU GIVE THEM *STRENGTH*, MY LOVE THE PEOPLE NEED THEIR *KING*, NOW MORE THAN EVER

AND I MY *QUEEN*

THOOM

WHAT IS IT?

THE *SEIGE* WALL HAS BEEN *BREACHED!*

CHOOM

KING DANE OF THE HERON EMPIRE UNDER FORCE OF ARMS, I *COMMAND* YOU TO *YIELD* YOUR TITLE LANDS, AND DOMINION TO THE NATION OF TIGRIS!

NNNH NEVER!
WHAT MAKES YOU THINK YOU HAVE A CHOICE, OLD MAN?
BACK YOU TIN-PLATED TROLLOP! LEST I CLEAVE YOUR BRAINS FROM YOUR BONES!
MARIELLA!
IS THAT SO?
I AM A DAUGHTER OF WARRIOR STOCK, A SWORD-MAIDEN OF THE HIGH KINGS OF ALBION, AND I DO NOT FEAR YOU!
WE ONLY NEED THE KING ALIVE. KILL THE CRONE!

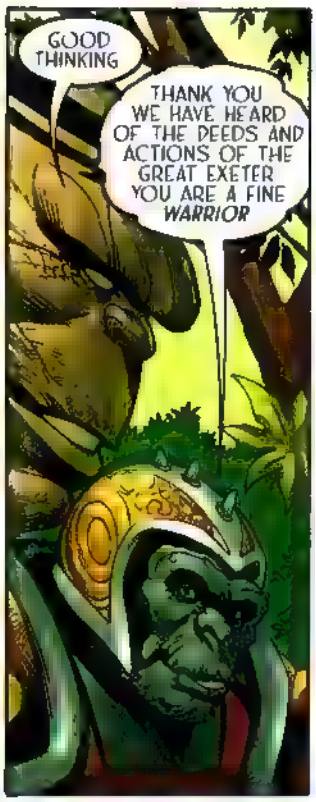
GHH!
SHRANNG
HAVE A CARE, WITCH!
THIS CRONE STILL HAS ONE GOOD TOOTH LEFT!
SHZKK
UHNN!

GYAHH!
KHUNG
DANE, GO! THE SECRET PASSAGE, IT'S
NO ONE LEAVES! EVERYONE STAYS!
MARIELLA!!
IS A CORPSE!

NO
NO
YOU WILL BE AVENGED, MY LOVE.
NO, SHE WON'T!
IT IS NOT JUST THE HERON NATION THAT BELONGS TO TIGRIS, BUT ALSO THE MIND OF ITS KING!
ZZIK
GUH

YOU WILL COME BACK WITH ME *NOW!*
YES.
WE *CAN'T* LET THEM TAKE HIM! WE *HAVE* TO DO SOMETHING!
KAI, NO! WE WE CANNOT! *YOU* CANNOT!
YLENA?
YOU COULD BE KILLED, CAPTURED OR *WORSE!* MOTHER IS DEAD, FATHER IS LOST TO THE ENEMY
WHETHER YOU *WISH* IT OR NOT, YOU ARE NOW *KING!*
"AND HOUSE HERON LOOKS TO *YOU* FOR ITS SALVATION!"

I'M CURIOUS, COMMANDER HOW DID YOU MAKE IT HERE *WITHOUT* BEING DETECTED?
IT'S IN OUR *NATURE*, WHAT WE ARE *BUILT* TO DO.
WE TRAVELLED AT NIGHT, MOSTLY MADE LANDFALL ON THE SHORE BORDERED BY THIS FOREST SO WE WOULDN'T BE SEEN


GOOD THINKING
THANK YOU WE HAVE HEARD OF THE DEEDS AND ACTIONS OF THE GREAT EXETER YOU ARE A FINE *WARRIOR*

SO, HOW MANY TROOPERS CAME WITH YOU?

WHY, *ALL* OF THEM?

OH.

KORAK! KORAK HAS RETURNED!!

THIS IS BUT ONE ENCAMPMENT THERE ARE *OTHERS* SCATTERED THROUGHOUT THE FOREST SOME *THREE THOUSAND* WARRIORS IN TOTAL, ALL LOYAL TO YOU, ETHAN
FOR THE *FIRST* TIME WE HAVE A CAUSE WORTH FIGHTING FOR WORTH *DYING* FOR!
ASHLEIGH, WHAT'S WRONG?
THINK, ETHAN EVEN WITH A *HUNDRED* TIMES THEIR NUMBER, WE'RE *STILL* NO REAL THREAT TO TIGRIS!
ONLY IF WE *CONTINUE* TO FIGHT USING SWORD AND SPEARS!
ETHAN, WHAT DO YOU ?
OH NO! THOSE WEAPONS WERE *HIDDEN* FOR A REASON! THEY SHOULD *NEVER* BE USED!
I *KNOW*, BUT I NO LONGER HAVE A *CHOICE*!
"I INTEND TO *WIN* THIS WAR BY *WHATEVER* MEANS *NECESSARY*"

Lady Death: THE WILD HUNT PREVIEW INSIDE!

Scion®

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Jennifer Cross
Andrew Crossley

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Previously In Scion

Granted a mysterious and powerful sigil during ritual combat, Prince Ethan of the Heron Dynasty accidentally scarred his rival, the Raven's Prince Bron. War between the kingdoms soon erupted, but Ethan controversially sided with Raven Princess Ashleigh and pledged his loyalty to her Underground movement, a rag-tag force dedicated to freeing the genetically engineered Lesser Races.

Founding a Sanctuary island for the emancipated slaves, Ethan eventually succeeded in ending the war through the use of his amazing powers. The young prince and Ashleigh then journeyed to the distant realm of Tigris in hopes of striking a treaty, but the mechanical monarchy instead launched an all-out invasion of both the Raven and Heron kingdoms... and Sanctuary Isle itself! With Heron's King Dane captured, all looks lost, but now — joined by the ferocious Janissary army — Ethan and his allies fight back!

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Fabrizio wishes to dedicate this issue to his best creation Maria Francesca!

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GOOD PEOPLE OF AVALON, *REJOICE!* LIFT UP YOUR *HEARTS* AND BREATHE THE SWEET AIR OF *FREEDOM!* FOR *PEACE* PREVAILS AT *LAST* IN YOUR TROUBLED LANDS!
PEACE UNDER A *TIGRIS* BANNER!

ON THIS GREAT DAY AN ACCORD HAS BEEN STRUCK BETWEEN THE TIGRIS NATION AND THE HOUSES OF HERON AND RAVEN!

EACH HAS FREELY LAID DOWN THEIR ARMS AND CONCEDED SOVEREIGNTY TO TIGRIS TO SHOW OUR GOOD FAITH IN THIS ACT OF AMITY, WE DECLARE THAT KING DANE AND KING BRON SHALL CONTINUE TO RULE THEIR RESPECTIVE REALMS ON OUR BEHALF

FATHER WILL BE A *PUPPET* DANCING TO THEIR TUNE!

REMEMBER, HIS MIND IS *NOT* HIS OWN, KAI

AND WHAT OF *BRON?* I DOUBT HE TOOK *MUCH* PERSUADING!

IT WOULD BE *JUST* LIKE HIM TO *THROW* IN WITH THE ENEMY HE'S ADEPT AT *EXPLOITING* PEOPLE FOR HIS OWN ENDS

DAMN! YLENA I'M SORRY!

DON'T BE IT'S NO *WORSE* THAN I'VE THOUGHT *MYSELF*

Oh, NO LOOK!
MY FRIENDS MY COUNTRYMEN... I REALIZE THAT TO MANY, TO SURRENDER AND CAPITULATE WITH AN ENEMY IS A GALLING ACT OF SHAME HOWEVER, NOTHING COULD BE FURTHER FROM THE TRUTH!
WE HAVE WASTED TOO MANY YEARS AND LIVES FEUDING WITH HOUSE RAVEN THIS WAR WITH TIGRIS HAS FORCED US TO OPEN OUR EYES, TO SEE THE ERROR OF OUR WAYS
IF SACRIFICING OUR FREEDOM IS THE PRICE OF PEACE AND PROSPERITY, THEN SO BE IT! LET IT START HENCEFORTH!
WELL SAID AND WELL MET, YOUR HIGHNESS
FATHER NO
WAIT WHAT'S THAT?
FASHOOM

IT CAN'T BE?
IT IS
"...IT'S OUR LITTLE BROTHER"
"IT'S ETHAN!"
FORWARD!
FOR AVALON! FOR FREEDOM!

THOOM
CHOOM
BAKOOM
KORAK! GET YOUR WARRIORS TO CONCENTRATE THEIR FIRE ON THE TROOPSHIPS AND FIGHTER CARRIERS!
ASHLEIGH, YOU'RE WITH ME. IT'S TIME WE PAID HER HIGHNESS A HOUSE CALL
COME, LITTLE TIN MEN! THE DOGS OF WAR HAVE COME TO PLAY! HAH! HARH! HARH!
THIS IS INTOLERABLE! WITHOUT AIR COVER WE'RE VIRTUALLY DEFENSELESS!
WHERE DID THEY GET THOSE MACHINES?
WHAT ARE YOUR ORDERS, YOUR SERENITY?
RECALL THE FLEET, YOU IMBECILE! BEFORE ALL THAT'S LEFT OF US--

"-IS SLAG AND SCRAP!"
IT DOESN'T LOOK GOOD, SIRE
THREE LEGIONS FROM THE PROVINCES, A *SMATTERING* OF LOCAL MILITIA--LITTLE MORE THAN OLD MEN AND CHILDREN -*THAT'S* OUR ARMY!
IT WILL DO. IT WILL *HAVE* TO
YOUR HIGHNESS! YOU MUST COME QUICKLY!
SOLDIER! SHOW SOME *RESPECT!* YOU DO NOT BARK ORDERS AT A KING!
LET HIM BE, RIGA. WE'RE *PAST* STANDING ON CEREMONY ANYMORE
WELL, BOY, WHAT'S YOUR *NEWS?*
IT'S THE ENEMY FLEET, SIRE
"IT'S *LEAVING!*"
WHY WOULD THEY TURN TAIL *NOW?*
QUESTION IS IS THIS A *GOOD* THING?

SIRE, WORD'S COMING IN. THE TIGRIS FLOTILLA IS UNDER ATTACK BY THE HERON PRINCE ETHAN AND AN ARMY OF LESSER RACE BEINGS. THEY SEEM TO BE WINNING!
HE MUST HAVE HURT THEM BADLY IF THEY NEED TO RECALL THEIR WARSHIPS!
LEAVING THEIR GROUND FORCES UNSUPPORTED!
GENERAL RIGA, GENERAL ZEIS, MUSTER OUR FORCES! WE SHALL SEIZE THE ADVANTAGE AND WORRY AT OUR ENEMY'S BACK!
SIRE, THERE'S MORE
PRINCE ETHAN ATTACKED JUST AFTER THE KHANATE HAD DECLARED THE SURRENDER OF BOTH HERON AND RAVEN NATIONS.
NONE BUT THE KING MAY RELENT THE NATION TO A VICTOR!
IT'S TRUE, SIR
KING DANE CONFIRMED THE SURRENDER FOR THE HERON EMPIRE . AND KING BRON FOR THE RAVEN
WHAT?!

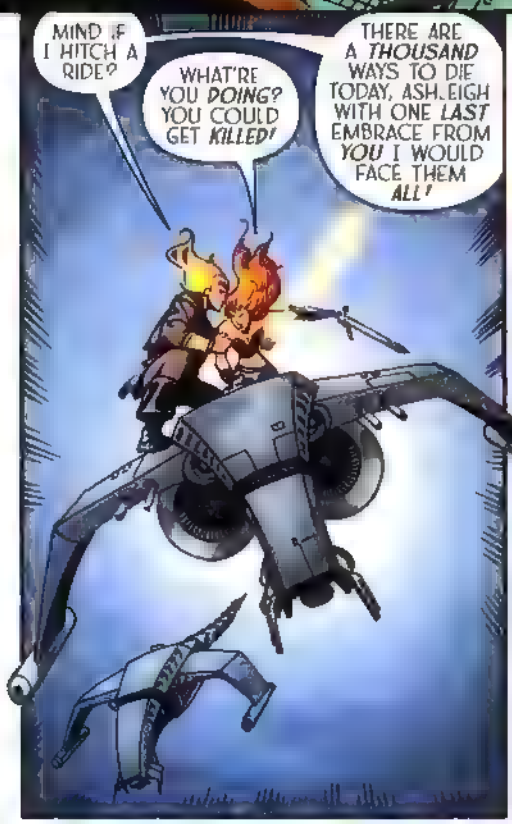
THERE IS NOTHING MORE TO SEE HERE! DISPERSE OR SUFFER THE CONSEQUENCES!
NO ONE TELLS US WHAT TO DO ON OUR LAND! YOU ARE THE ONES LEAVING!
SQUEEE-
PEOPLE OF HERON! JOIN ME! RISE UP AND FACE OUR FOE HEAD ON! WE HAVE NOTHING TO LOSE BUT OUR CHAINS!
FIGHT! FIGHT AND BE FREE!
IT'S PRINCE KAI AND PRINCESS YLENA!

DESTROY THEM!
DEATH TO THE MACHINES!
KAI, THE WARSHIPS. THEY'RE LEAVING?
ETHAN

"SKINK, IS EVERYTHING READY?"
AS IT WILL *EVER* BE! ETHAN, ARE YOU *SURE* ABOUT THIS?
WE DON'T HAVE A CHOICE, OLD FRIEND. IT'S THE *ONLY* OPTION LEFT TO US. IT'S THAT OR LIVE UNDER A TIGRIS BOOT-HEEL!
I'M PICKING UP *MULTIPLE* SIGNALS CLOSING IN ON YOUR POSITION FROM THE EAST *AND* WEST. THEIR FORM AND CONFIGURATION MATCHES THAT OF THE TIGRIS *WAR FLEET!*
THEY'RE NO MORE THAN *TWELVE MINUTES* TO INTERCEPT
UNDERSTOOD YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO
YES. I *PRAY* THAT YOU'RE MAKING THE RIGHT CHOICE DEPLOYING THE *WEAPON* NOW

THMMMMM
THMMMMM
FSSSSHHH

ETHAN! WE HAVE WROUGHT WHAT DAMAGE WE CAN, BUT NO LONGER HAVE THE ELEMENT OF SURPRISE THROUGH FORCE OF ARMS ALONE, THE TIDE TURNS IN THEIR FAVOR!
UNDERSTOOD BUT IT'S IMPERATIVE YOU HOLD THE LINE YOU MUST KEEP THEM OCCUPIED UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE OR ALL WILL BE LOST!
THEN WE SHALL STAY AND STAND TO THE LAST! VICTORY OR DEATH!


MIND IF I HITCH A RIDE?
WHAT'RE YOU DOING? YOU COULD GET KILLED!
THERE ARE A THOUSAND WAYS TO DIE TODAY, ASHLEIGH WITH ONE LAST EMBRACE FROM YOU I WOULD FACE THEM ALL!

ETHAN, WHAT'S WRONG? WHY ARE YOU BEHAVING SO STRANGELY?
FORGIVE ME, BELOVED, BUT IN A FEW SHORT MINUTES I SHALL KNOW IF I HAVE DOOMED OUR WORLD OR SAVED IT!

WHAT DO YOU MEAN oh, MY. THE CASTLE! YOU TOOK MORE THAN JUST THESE SKYBIKES, DIDN'T YOU?! WHAT HAVE YOU DONE?!
WHAT WAS NEEDED THE DIE IS CAST

THE PLAYERS TAKE THEIR *POSITIONS* IT'S TIME FOR THE *FINAL* ACT!

ETHAN, I *BEG* YOU DON'T *DO* THIS! THERE HAS TO BE ANOTHER WAY

I *WISH* THERE WERE, BUT THIS IS NO TIME FOR *DEBATE*

KORAK

YES, ETHAN?

PULL BACK TO THE CASTLE *IMMEDIATELY* YOU HAVE TO BE ON THE GROUND IN FOUR MINUTES, *NO* EXCEPTIONS!

UNDERSTOOD!

YOU MUST GO TOO, ASHLEIGH!

NO! FOR BETTER OR WORSE I SHALL STAND WITH YOU!

IF NOT FOR *ME* THEN FOR OUR *CHILD!*

YOU YOU *KNOW?* BUT *HOW?*

FRUIT PUDDING AND PICKLES FOR *BREAKFAST?*

MY MOTHER HAD SIMILAR *CRAVINGS* WHEN SHE WAS CARRYING *ME!*

NOW GO! MHINDA WILL THINK YOU'RE *RETREATING* IT'LL BUY ME SOME TIME

TIME? FOR WHAT

" OR SHOULDN'T I ASK?"
FINALLY! THEIR FIGHTERS ARE WITHDRAWING CONTACT THE FLEET, TELL THEM TO THROW A PROTECTIVE CORDON AROUND THE FLOTILLA, AND SEND THE REST AFTER THAT RABBLE!
YOU HAVE PAID THE PRICE FOR RESISTANCE WITH YOUR DEAREST BLOOD, YOUR HIGHNESS. FIRST YOUR WIFE, AND NOW YOUR SON!
IS YOUR MUCH VAUNTED FREE WILL REALLY WORTH SUCH A COST?
SKREE!!!--
ETHAN!
IN THE FLESH, ANDROID! MINE SHALL BE THE LAST HERON NAME YOUR LIPS EVER UTTER!
THEN WHAT OF RAVEN? KING BRON, REMOVE THAT THING FROM THIS VESSEL. IN PIECES!
AS YOUR WILL COMMANDS, YOUR SERENITY

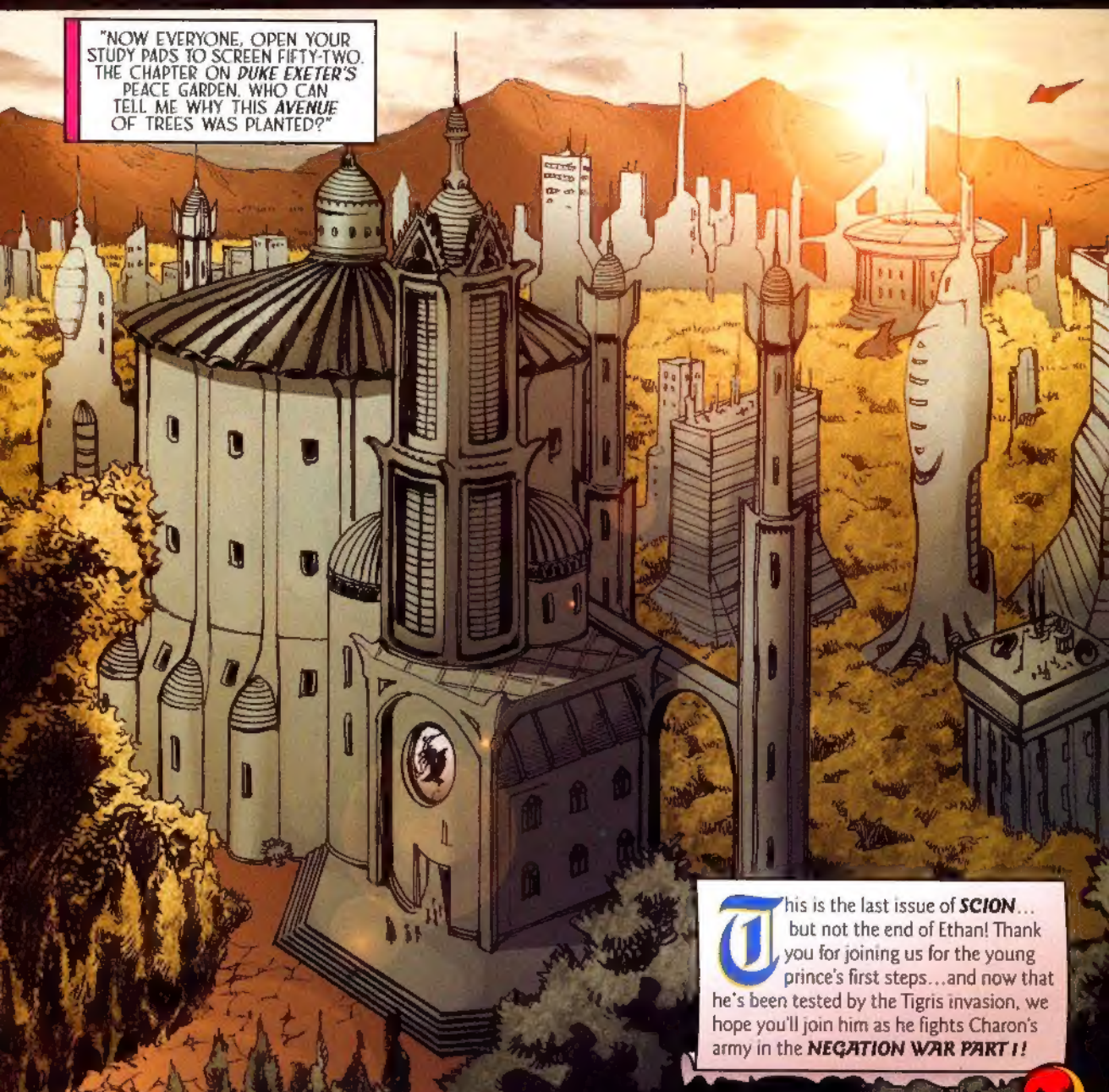
IT'S IRONIC, THIS SCENE HAS A CERTAIN SYMMETRY TO IT WITH ONE EXCEPTION YOU'RE NOT BRON!
TEK
ZZZAKK
FOR ALL HIS FAILINGS, BRON WOULDN'T HAVE MISSED!
SKRAANG
Uhh..
SZAK!
A HAND WEAPON? I'M DISAPPOINTED DOESN'T THIS METAL MONSTROSITY HAVE ANY TRICKS UP ITS SLEEVE?

NO TRICKS NO NEED THIS IS YOUR FATHER! A LOYAL INSTRUMENT OF TIGRIS!
NOW KILL HIM! END THIS DEBACLE!
DID YOU NOT HEAR ME? I SAID KILL HIM!
NOOOO!
UTT-

YOU MURDERED MY WIFE...
...SLAUGHTERED MY PEOPLE! YOU WOULD MAKE ME LAY A KILLER'S HANDS UPON MY SON?
BURN, WITCH! GO BACK TO THE HELL THAT SPAWNED YOU!
IIIIIIEEEE...
KZZAK
FATHER...
MY BOY... MY DEAREST SON...
...FORGIVE ME...
Nhh...IS... IS IT TRUE? IS MOTHER... DEAD?
IT IS... SHE...SHE DIED A WARRIOR'S DEATH.
COME, YOU NEED MEDICAL ATTENTION.
THERE ISN'T TIME. SEE? OUR DESTINY IS ALREADY WRITTEN IN THE SKY.
THEN IT IS TOO LATE. THIS IS THE END.
NO. IT'S JUST BEGINNING.

ETHAN REX
...AND WHILE AN OLD, HIDDEN DEVICE FROM THE HERON FAMILY ATOMICS HAD BEEN USED, PRINCE ETHAN AND LORD SKINK--NOT A LORD THEN, OF COURSE, BUT ETHAN'S AIDE--HAD *ALTERED* IT, SO THE FALLOUT WOULD BE ALMOST NEXT TO *NONE*...
INSTEAD, IT WAS THE ELECTROMAGNETIC PULSE FROM THE BLAST THAT *DISABLED* THE TIGRIS ARMY AND ARMADA. AND THAT WAS HOW THE *FIRST* AUTOMATA WAR WAS WON!
SO, DID PRINCE ETHAN *DIE*?
ETHAN REX

NUH-UH! HE FOUGHT IN THE SECOND AND THIRD MACHINE WARS, THEN GOT CROWNED KING...AN' THAT'S WHEN ALL THE BIG STUFF REALLY HAPPENED!
BUT HOW COME HE AN' HIS DAD DIDN'T GET BLOWED UP? THEY WERE RIGHT THERE WHEN THE BOMB WENT OFF!
YES... WELL...THAT, YOUNG MAN, IS A STORY FOR ANOTHER DAY.


"NOW EVERYONE, OPEN YOUR STUDY PADS TO SCREEN FIFTY-TWO. THE CHAPTER ON DUKE EXETER'S PEACE GARDEN. WHO CAN TELL ME WHY THIS AVENUE OF TREES WAS PLANTED?"

This is the last issue of **SCION**... but not the end of Ethan! Thank you for joining us for the young prince's first steps...and now that he's been tested by the Tigris invasion, we hope you'll join him as he fights Charon's army in the **NEGATION WAR PART 1!**